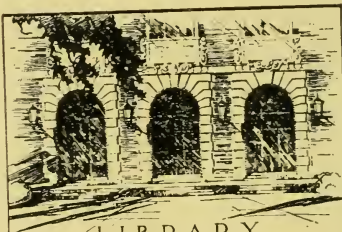


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THE
EARTHQUAKE.

THE
EARTHQUAKE;

A
T A L E.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE AYRSHIRE LEGATEES."

A voice in the heavens—a sound in the earth—
And omens and prodigies herald the birth;—
But the deeds that shall be to the sins that were done,
Are darker than shadows to forms in the sun.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

EDINBURGH;

PRINTED FOR WILLIAM BLACKWOOD:
AND T. CADELL AND W. DAVIES, STRAND, LONDON.

1820.

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THE
EARTHQUAKE.

CHAPTER I.

It shall be so. Oh, would that it were so;
But, oh, dire fate, I fear it will not be!"

THE TRIAL.

THE two travellers, after a short conversation, fell into a sort of conscious sleep, the dreams of which accorded with their respective situations. The poet's were full of splendour; the shouts of applauding Theatres resounded in his ear, and if the pale and fading phantoms of apprehension occasionally flitted across the vision, their transit only served to set off with greater brightness the silvery-winged hopes that came

ever and anon flocking to his fancy, like doves in the sunshine. The outcast's were made up of far other imagery. The resolution to change the character of his actions stood like a beautiful rainbow in the clouds that spread darkness over his future destiny. As often as he thought of the reception which his brother might give him, a fierce glance of despair flickered like lightning over the prospect, and a deep and aimless misanthropy rolled a peal of terrible and universal vengeance. Generous as the disposition of Lord Wildwaste seemed to be, Castagnello could not disguise from his experience, that the benevolence which was shown to an ill-fated convict, might recoil with disgust when claimed for a disgraceful relation.

At other times the outcast pleased himself with the idea, that his Lordship would receive him with affection, and then his imagination luxuriated in the contemplation of enjoying again, but with temperance as he intended, those pleasures to which he was constitutionally so strongly prone. But still the

desire to master the inherent demon of his voluptuous passions, gave strength to his purposes of amendment, and he often solaced himself with the hope of obtaining respect and fortune. In the midst, however, of this pleasing anticipation, the hideous memory of his infamy, like the Ghost at the banquet of Macbeth, would intrude itself and shake him with the most horrible imaginings.

The whole of the first day's journey thus passed in dull, unsocial, selfish meditation. The travellers rested for the night at the village of Galfa, on the great road from Palermo to Castro Giovanni, and at break of day they resumed their journey.

It was a bright and dewy autumnal morning. The corn-fields were cleared of the crop, but the vintage had not commenced; the grapes, however, hung almost ready for gathering, and Nature wore that matronly composure which distinguishes the maturity of the year.

As they descended from the mountains towards the northern shores of the kingdom, the country gradually assumed a more rural

appearance. The cultivated spaces spread higher up the sides of the hills, and numerous lively-looking little white-washed cottages smirked among the inclosures of the valleys. The sullenness of Castagnello was dissolved by the cheerfulness of nature. Salpano looked forth from the letica with talkative emotions of wonder and delight, and his fancy expatiated in the Elysium of hope, but with the diffidence of a young bird that still distrusts the strength of its wings.

About noon they arrived in view of the coast, and the prospect from the spot where they first discovered it, is one of the finest in the world. On the right, far below, lay the gorgeous but widely-scattered village of the Bagaria, which consist of palaces and villas of beautiful architecture ; and on turning to the left, they beheld Palermo, crowned with its gilded domes and spires, lying as it were in magnificent repose at the bottom of Mount Pelegrino, the most picturesque of all the Sicilian hills.

Castagnello, at the sight of this superb capital, felt his heart bound ; but its emo-

tions were far from blameless. His first thoughts were indeed free from impurity, for they were recollections of his boyhood. The bright-blue sea, speckled with innumerable boats, reminded him of the bay of Naples, and all the haunts and amusements of his innocent days came in diversified succession over his memory. But as he approached the town, this softened remembrance of his native scenes passed away, and a tumultuous train of associations, connected with his libertine pursuits in Paris, mingled with his reflections on the uncertainty that still awaited him.

The state of his companion's feelings was far different. When he saw the splendour of the city afar off, his heart grew big with the throbs of ambition, and forgetful that the greatest portion of mankind are but slightly removed from poverty, he expected to see in Palermo only the most sumptuous spectacles of opulence, grandeur, and felicity. But as the magnificent outline of the distant landscape was filled up with those

mean and slovenly objects which occupy so much space in the nearer view, his mind began to waver, and although the day was uncommonly warm, he felt now and then something like an acute sensation of cold quiver with the speed of electricity from his heart to all his extremities. As the letica entered the city gate, he actually trembled with chilliness and fear ; the sense of disappointment, however, was perhaps the keenest with which he was affected. For, instead of the pompous arches and lofty porticos that he had pictured to himself—the long colonnades and majestic flights of innumerable steps—the avenues of statues and fountains—the masses of wealth and the groupes of illustrious nobles,—he saw in succession but uncouth piles of ruinous buildings—narrow streets, uneven with filth and rubbish—swarms of women and children in the ragged squallor of disease and poverty : for marble fountains, flinging chrysaline waters to the skies, a few small frying-pans breathing the rancid smoke of simmer-

ing fish, and for the Parian statues of the most illustrious of all the earth, little painted dolls and images of saints, with a begging-box and a winking lamp before them.

They stopped in a lane leading from the Piazza Marina, one of the principal squares, at a house which aspired to the epithet of an hotel, but to nothing else which distinguishes that species of inn from a common public-house, except in not being frequented for the mere purpose of drinking. Immediately on their arrival, Castagnello sent for a tailor, and ordered a suit of clothes, having resolved not to call on his brother in the uniform of the Grand Master of Malta, which he still wore.

Poor Salpano was in a state of the most forlorn dejection. He sighed with regret as he thought of his school and his affectionate pupils at Gergente; he looked out at the window, but instead of the expansive sea and the superb ruins of Agrigentum, which he was wont to contemplate from his former lodgings with enthusiasm, and inhaled poesy from the airs that came with

fragrance from the beautiful gardens in the valley, he saw but the overshadowing dark walls of a decayed mansion, in the unclean portal of which sat a wretched beldam, selling the coarse fruit of the Indian fig or prickly pear. He turned with chagrin and disgust from the sight, and seated himself in the darkest corner of the chamber to conceal his agitation.

Castagnello, who in the meantime had ordered dinner, was walking to and fro in the room, warbling by starts some of the cadences of the finest songs of Sacchini, but at times he would pause and look around as if he shrunk from observation. A painter in these moments who could have delineated the expression of his countenance, might have described the picture as Guilt dreading detection.

Salpano was not so entirely wrapt up in himself, but that he observed some of these occasional glimpses of the inner man; and the poignancy of his feelings was quickened into painful anxiety when he thought of the

precipitancy with which he had embarked his fortunes with a stranger of whom he knew nothing.

When dinner was served, they sat down to table, and the outcast ate with cheerfulness, and rallied the poet on his dejection; but the distrustful bard could hardly be persuaded to taste of any thing, and when he did make an effort, the morsel, like Macbeth's amen, stuck in his throat, and was swallowed with pain.

The wine which the house supplied was not good, and Castagnello sent to a shop for some of a better quality, in which he indulged till he was flushed, but not intoxicated. The evening being now far advanced, he proposed that they should visit some of those hospitable damsels whose arms and houses are alike open to the stranger.

The innocent Salpano, who had been bred with the most scrupulous chastity, and who regarded the continence of Scipio as one of the most perfect examples of human virtue, was shocked at the proposal, and exclaimed

with indignant astonishment, "In the name of Heaven, into what abandoned company have I fallen?"

The earnest and impassioned sincerity of this expression rung upon the ear of Castagnello. The recollection of his degradation mounted like a whirlwind, and he fell back in his seat abashed and chastised. The flush of the wine vanished from his face, and was succeeded by a pale and withering languor which the unhappy Salpano contemplated with amazement and fear.

After a pause of several minutes, Castagnello recovered, and said, "Do not be surprised, my friend, at my inconsistencies. I have met with many things that I would forget, and to stifle the recollection, I am led to indulge myself far beyond the temperance of virtue."

The guileless Salpano looked at him with compassion, believing that he was only one of those gay and thoughtless characters, who as they advance in life, redeem the indiscretions of their youth, and adorn the

world with a noble and generous manhood.

While they were thus sitting together, they heard the noise of an unusual number of persons passing under the window, and soon after the sound of several carriages. They inquired of the landlord what was the cause, and were informed that the Theatre was in the next street, and that the celebrated tragedy of *Merope*, by Maffei, was to be performed that night, for the first time in Palermo. Castagnello, on receiving this information, immediately started up, and proposed that they should go to the Theatre. "It is a divine production," said he to the poet, "and you will be infinitely delighted."

Salpano readily acquiesced in this proposal, and partly revealed the object of his journey to the capital. The scheme did not appear to Castagnello very absurd; for his acquaintance with the performers in Paris had familiarized him to extraordinary instances of success in persons as friendless as

the poor schoolmaster: But he was not aware of the difference between histrionic and literary merit—a single evening is often sufficient to place the actor at the top of his profession, but life and a century may pass away before the merits of an author are fully recognised.

CHAPTER II.



Yes, I have seen her—O, my heart how chang'd !
The blushing cherub, beauteous innocence,
Pure as the spirits that at Heaven's gate,
Like winged babes, bring little children in,
Has fled for ever, and a lurking sin
Sits in the corner of her faithless eye.

G. HALITON.

ON reaching the doors of the Theatre, it was with difficulty that they obtained admission ; for although the crowd was not great, almost every seat was engaged. But at last they found room in that division of the pit, which in the continental theatres is allotted to the same class of spectators who with us occupy the galleries ; and we may here mention, by way of a gentle hint to the Managers of the British playhouses,

that this arrangement, and the plan of sub-dividing the benches into a certain number of places, is much better calculated to prevent disturbance, and to promote the comfort of the audience, than any thing they have yet devised for these purposes. Each bench is distinguished alphabetically, and each sub-division or seat, about the size of an arm-chair, is numbered arithmetically, so that the "play-going people" may not only previously engage a particular seat for any evening, but go to it at any time during the course of the performance, and find it free.

It happened on this occasion that there had been a gala at Court during the day, and as usual when that is the case at Palermo, the theatre was lighted up with extraordinary splendour. The company in general were also dressed in their best, and the nobility, who had been at the Palace, came in their state attire. Salpano had never beheld any assemblage half so gorgeous, and his imagination rekindled with all the vanities in which he was wont to

indulge. He gazed around him in restless extasy, and prattled with the incessant tongue of a child intoxicated with delight. But Castagnello was dull and absent—his eyes wandered over the whole scene, and found no object to rest on. In this state he remained till the house was nearly filled, and the musicians were taking their places in the orchestra. The bustle of this, and the sound of a party entering one of the boxes immediately above the end of the bench on which he was seated, roused him from his reverie, and on looking up he beheld his foster-sister, the beautiful Bellina, handed to her seat by a gentleman who placed himself by her side, and whom the outcast immediately suspected supplied the place of her husband, in the character of her Cicesbeo.

This discovery and suspicion excited all the bad passions of his bosom, and pangs of jealousy, resentment, love and sorrow shot through his tingling frame. He hung his head to avoid her eye, and meditated,

with alternate fits of fierceness and affection, on the means of once more obtaining access to her company.

The overture was now performed, the curtain drew up, and Salpano was agitated with a thousand feelings before unfelt. The shades of *Æschylus*, *Sophocles*, and *Euripides* seemed to be hovering over the stage, and the glory of scenes that he had imagined the degeneracy of the moderns could never reach, appeared realised before him. Of the actual state of Italian literature, he knew nothing; and he cherished that contempt for the genius of his own age which distinguishes the worshippers of antiquity. He had read, indeed, the works of *Dante*, *Ariosto*, and *Tasso*, but it was with that mitigated scorn which might be expected from a young man who believes that the Greek and Latin languages contain all the excellence to which the human mind can ever attain. For although conscious of his own poetical capacity, his modesty never allowed him to think that it

was destined to exalt him beyond a place among the inferior moderns. But when the drama commenced, his ear was pricked with the sensation of something that he could not describe; surprise, mingled with apprehension, overwhelmed his faculties, and when the first act closed, he sat mute and abashed as if he had sustained the rebuke of an awful and superior being. He would not, however, allow to himself that Maffei had reached the pathos and sublimity of his favourite classics, but he was chilled to think that the beauty of his own Italian tragic muse was at least equalled.

As the play proceeded, the interest of the plot, the tenderness and passion of the dialogue gradually absorbed his attention until, in total forgetfulness of the fiction, he wept aloud with delight and sympathy till every eye in the house was turned towards him, and when the curtain dropped over the catastrophe, a loud peal of applause followed; but it was universally allowed by the whole audience that the impression

which had been produced on the ingenuous stranger, was the most unequivocal proof of the admirable genius of Maffei.

As the spectators rose to depart, the eye of Bellina caught that of Castagnello: she looked at him for a moment and turned aside overspread with blushes. He would have rushed to the door to meet her at her carriage, but the crowd necessitated him to remain, and he saw her go away without again deigning even to look towards the place where he stood, shuddering with sickly and embittered thoughts.

On returning to the hotel he immediately retired to his chamber for the night; but Salpano sat down and meditated on what he had seen, and sighed to think that if a poet, of whose name he had never before heard, for he was not conscious of the extent of his own ignorance, could write with taste and elegance not unworthy of Sophocles, what reward could he expect?—When, however, he went to bed, the confidence in his own endowments returned,

and he thought that were he to devote his talents to the composition of a drama, founded on modern feelings and circumstances, he might open to himself a path to glory which had not yet been tried.—With the complacency of this notion he fell into a profound sleep.

In the morning, Castagnello came into his room, and shaking him awake, requested him to get up and go to the house where he had been informed the Earl of Wildwaste resided, to enquire if he was then in Palermo. The poet, on opening his eyes, was startled at the appearance of Castagnello, for he had passed a wild and restless night; his face was haggard, his eyes hollow, and his complexion wan and ghastly—but Salpano, without making any remark, immediately rose, and having hastily partaken of the spare breakfast to which the Sicilians are accustomed, he went, conducted by an errand boy, to make the enquiry in which his companion seemed so deeply interested.

Lord Wildwaste had, however, not yet

returned from his tour, but was expected in the course of a day or two, and with this information Salpano hastened back to the hotel. Having delivered the answer, he retired to his own apartment, and immediately set himself down to write a tragedy upon the plan which he deemed so original. It is unnecessary to inform the bulk of mankind, whom we hope will become our readers, that a poet, so engaged, is not likely to think much about any thing else ; and it so happened in this case. The sun set, and the shades of evening rendered it impossible for Salpano to write longer, before he recollected that he had tasted but little food since his dinner the preceding day. His absence had surprised Castagnello, who also was so much engaged with his own peculiar cares, that he left the bard undisturbed in the beatitude of composition. The poet, however, felt somewhat awkward when he reflected on his inattention, and uneasy when after partaking of a hasty meal, he waited long in vain

for the return of the convict, who had walked out alone immediately after dining.

At first this anxiety was only a vague curiosity, but it became more and more intense, till in a fit of desperation he ran to his trunk, and opening it with precipitation, examined the little horde of his savings. In the same moment Castagnello entered the room, and observing what he was about, rallied him on his riches, and questioned him where he had been all day.

The safety of his money re-assured the heart and confidence of Salpano, and he exultingly told Castagnello how he had been employed, and with what success he had propitiated the Muses.

“ But it will never do,” said the libertine, “ to study so constantly—you must take a little recreation—I have discovered a billiard-room close by—let us go there and spend an hour or two—it will help to divert us.” The bard replied, that he could not

play. "O, never mind that; you can look on. As for myself I have no intention to do more—I have abjured gaming altogether, but one can look on, and enjoy the emulation of those who do play."

This seemed a very reasonable proposition, and Salpano accordingly agreed to accompany him.

CHAPTER III.



Amidst the sunshine, when I courted hope,
A sudden shadow on my spirit fell,
As if some demon had obtained permission
To pass between me and the light of bliss.

G. HALITON.

ON entering the billiard-room, they found the tables occupied, but soon after one of the party having occasion to go away, Castagnello was induced to take his place. For some time he preserved the coolness with which he had resolved to conduct himself, but as the interest of the game rose, the ardour of his temper was excited, and he betted and staked with such success, that Salpano believed Fortune herself was pouring upon him all the riches of her cornucopia.

As long as this good luck continued, the outcast played boldly and staked freely ;

but taught by experience the moment that he perceived a change setting against him, he stopped and retired from the table.

On returning to the hotel he was in good spirits, but the uncertainty as to the reception he might receive from his brother, repressed his exultation, and he bore his good fortune with so much moderation, in the classical opinion of Salpano, that the bard began to regard him with eyes of admiration.

Next morning Salpano renewed his addresses to Melpomene, while the outcast amused himself in visiting the most remarkable sights, and in acquiring that sort of local knowledge of objects, to which strangers on their arrival in a great city, should first devote their attention. They met at dinner, and the poet offered to read his play as far as it was written. Castagnello, having at the time no motive to action of any kind, readily consented to hear it, and the bard, when they had finished their meal, brought the manuscript and began to read.

The opening pleased Castagnello, and he gave it due praise ; but as the story proceeded he began to shift his position, and towards the close of the first act he actually yawned. Salpano, however, still went on, and had reached the most pathetic scene in the second act, when to his astonishment, a human head fell down before him and knocked the manuscript out of his hands. It was the head of Castagnello, who had been fairly read to sleep, and tumbled from his chair.

Poor Salpano was much chagrined at the soporific effect of his poetry, and Castagnello could make no satisfactory apology for what he had done. It was, however, agreed between them, that to read a work of any kind, after dinner, in a sultry afternoon, was the height of injustice to the author, and with this sound and philosophical conclusion they resolved to indulge themselves, like the generality of the Palermitans, with a siesta.

When they awoke, the time was verging towards evening, and Castagnello proposed that they should walk on the Marina, which

at that hour was frequented by the Sicilian nobility. Salpano, not being altogether well satisfied with the inspiration which the Muses had vouchsafed, and feeling no inclination at the moment to renew his invocations, readily acquiesced in the proposal.

The Marina of Palermo, in a fine evening, is one of the most delightful places of public resort in the world. It is a spacious terrace formed between the bottom of the walls of the city and the sea, protected towards the latter by a parapet, along the side of which a stone bench is formed for the use of those who choose to sit. In one place, in a splendid marble orchestra, adorned with sculpture, the musicians of the viceroy perform to the public, and at different stations along the whole extent of the promenade, are several beautiful fountains, the quiet soft murmuring of which affords a pleasing contrast to the deep and broken sounds of the sea. Around the orchestra and the fountains, like the competitors in the chariots of the ancient circus,

the gay, the fair, and the noble are driven in their splendid equipages, while a crowd of humbler spectators survey the elegant bustle of this charming scene from the seats along the parapet wall.

This cheerful spectacle of opulence, and fashion, and gaiety, appeared to the wondering eyes of Salpano, as the realization of all his splendid dreams, and he sat down beside Castagnello on the stone bench in a state of pleasing wonder. To Castagnello, who had seen the far gayer company of Naples, of Paris, and Versailles, there appeared nothing remarkable in the scene, and anxiety for his future fate absorbed his whole mind.

After sitting some time the strangers rose, and walked to the gardens of Flora, which open from the Marina by a superb gate, and in which all the peculiar beauties of the Italian taste in gardening, alcoves, fountains, statues, and bowers, are charmingly displayed. In this enchanted place, as it seemed to the delighted Salpano, they

lingered till the dews began to fall heavily, when the unhappy convict proposed that they should adjourn to the billiard-room. The amazing good fortune that had crowned his hazards the preceding evening, wrought with the persuasion of magic on the unfortunate poet, and the dreams of avarice banished in a moment all the influence which the chaste blandishments of elegance had obtained over his imagination. With sanguine hopes and light steps, Salpano left the Elysian bowers of the Flora, for a close, low, vulgar apartment, illuminated with dirty lamps, determined to bet as he had seen Castagnello do, and confident of acquiring a large addition to his slender purse. But, alas! how inconstant is Fortune—Castagnello, though a skilful player, met with his match, and lost all his stakes; the sum was not considerable, but it diminished the gains of the preceding evening. To Salpano, the consequences were most afflicting—he had backed Castagnello, and lost a sum equal to the greatest part of

all he possessed. The winner went with him home to receive the money, and he paid it with a heavy heart.

Next morning Castagnello learnt that Lord Wildwaste was arrived, and he lost no time in presenting himself. His Lordship received him with undisguised pleasure, and having heard from him in what manner he had escaped from Siculiana, renewed his promise to procure, if possible, his pardon; which indeed he effected the same day, without, however, apprising the minister that the delinquent was in Palermo.

At this interview Castagnello found himself unable to disclose the circumstances of their relationship. A sense of shame, and a thousand nameless feelings, made him uneasy and diffident. But on the following morning, when he went to offer his acknowledgments for the pardon, of which his Lordship had immediately on receiving a favourable answer to his application, sent him notice, he broached the subject.—Without once raising his eyes towards

Castagnello, Lord Wildwaste listened with profound attention to a summary of the narrative which we have minutely related, and when the convict ceased, a solemn pause ensued. Castagnello sat in a state of expectation, and his eyes fixed on his brother, flashed for a moment with fury, but were almost immediately flooded with tears.

“ I am sorry for you, Castagnello,” said Lord Wildwaste, thoughtfully—“ I am very sorry, but I fear your case is without remedy—I can do nothing for you”—

At these words the miserable outcast gasped with a sensation of suffocation, and rose to quit the room.

“ Where are you going ?” enquired his Lordship, in a tone of surprise.

The wretched Castagnello looked at him, but could not speak. His brother saw his agitation, and, deeply affected, said in a kind and affectionate manner, “ But I shall not reproach you. Let all reference to the past end here—you are my brother—it is my duty to serve you to the best of my

ability; from the moment I saw you, a strong partiality interested me in your favour, and you shall remain with me while I continue in Palermo, which is but for a few days—I then embark for Genoa, on my return to England—you will at least go with me to the Continent, and we may together devise some plan for your future life; but I fear, my brother, that your case is one without hope. The ingenuousness with which you have acknowledged to me your vices, convinces me that you think they have been but errors—But let us hope for the best.”

Castagnello was quite overcome by this unexpected turn which his destiny had taken; for he had interpreted the expression of Lord Wildwaste as a denial of assistance, and his spirit had sunk into the lowest depth of despair. He knew not, however, the excellent character of that amiable nobleman, who in listening to his story was grieved to the heart to find that each fresh incident only served to prove that his ill-fated brother was equally by

nature, education, and habit a libertine.— It was to this conviction that he alluded, when he said—“ I can do nothing for you.”

The generosity of Lord Wildwaste produced its natural effect on the mind of Castagnello, who remained with him as his companion and friend, forgetting in the variety of their visits the poor Salpano, who, meantime, in the desperate hope of recovering his lost money, went again to the billiard-room, and lost his all.

Castagnello spoke of him to his brother. His Lordship, diverted with the description of his simplicity, resolved if he could not promote his poetical ambition, at least to do something for him in a pecuniary point of view, and with this intention, on the third day after the explanation, they went together to the hotel; but on enquiring for the innocent bard, they were informed by the landlord that he had left his house.— “ He seemed much dejected,” said the Locandieré—“ I fear he has fallen into bad company; and unless the blessed Virgin,

with the help of Santa Rosalia, come to console him, he is a lost soul."

Castagnello did not feel quite satisfied with this communication; he was sensible that he had led the guileless Salpano into a course of speculations which, of all men, he was the least qualified to conduct properly. This, with the remembrance of his own previous disgrace, contrasted with the magnanimous liberality of his brother, repressed the bad qualities of his habits and nature, insomuch that Lord Wildwaste, after he had resided about a week with him, began to regard him as a being of a far different order to what he had at first thought. The personal appearance of Castagnello, improved with his amended life, and the spirited gaiety of his disposition emerged from under the morose cloud with which guilt and discontent had overshadowed it. His brother was gratified with the change; the penitent made rapid advances towards a higher range of life than he had ever before reached, even beyond that heroic career which he had commenced

under Marshal Daun ; but he was not satisfied with himself. The ignominy that he had suffered operated as a withering spell ; the manly frankness of his character was changed to a timid diffidence ; he was shy of appearing in public lest he should be recognised by any one who had seen him in the degradation of his fetters ; and that free and noble manhood which had hitherto reflected even a seeming grace on his worst actions, had departed from him, and a wary circumspection, unnatural to his character, had succeeded. Still, however, the original splendour of his endowments had suffered no diminution ; the materials of his character were still rich and singular, and he cherished the hope that as soon as he had bade adieu to Sicily, and was beyond the reach of exposure, some opportunity would present itself by which he should be enabled to realize the grandeur of the presentiment that had been entertained of him. This consolatory thought, so nearly allied to virtue, was encouraged by the kindness of his brother, who seeing the wish of the ill-

fated adventurer to become yet an honourable character, applauded his conduct, and with a warmth of feeling that showed how deeply he was interested in the result ; and he often expressed his regret at ever having entertained an idea derogatory to the principles of Castagnello. All was thus going well---the outcast, the felon, the convict, was redeeming the past, and time alone seemed requisite to confirm the virtuous habits he was so studious to acquire.

CHAPTER IV.



What little things in life's Olympic race
Have marred the boldest ?

OLD PLAY.

ABOUT a week after Castagnello and his brother had called at the hotel where they expected to find poor Salpano, the vessel was ready which Lord Wildwaste had hired to carry them to Genoa, and they were to embark in the evening. His Lordship, being in delicate health, went on board before sun-set, leaving Castagnello to come off with the luggage and servants. Some trifling omission in their stores, discovered at the moment when they were leaving the house, induced Castagnello to quit the part as they were on their way to the Marina, where a boat was prepared to receive them,

and to go back by himself to a shop ; none of the servants happening to understand enough of Italian to be able to do the business required.

Having purchased the articles, and given them in charge to a person who was to follow him to the boat, he returned down the Via Toledo, towards the Porto Felice, near to which the boat was waiting. But he had not proceeded above twenty paces when an open carriage, coming rapidly from the Marina, was suddenly overturned, and a lady and gentleman who were in it precipitated with great violence on the pavement.

Among others Castagnello ran to their assistance, ordering the person with the articles which he had purchased, to make haste to the boat, whither he would presently follow.

The evening was by this time far advanced, and the faces of one another in the street were not easily discriminated by the crowd. Castagnello was so fortunate as to rescue the lady from her perilous situation ;

but she was so stunned by the fall, and wounded on the head, that when he carried her in his arms to the nearest coffee-house, her stupor and the blood that flowed from her wound so disguised her countenance, that he did not discover it was his foster-sister, Bellina, till he was on the point of going away, having consigned her to the care of the surgeons and apothecaries who came flocking to the scene of the accident, like vultures and carrion crows to a field of battle.

The effect of this discovery rivetted him to the spot. All the world was absorbed in the intense feeling with which he was affected, and his brother, with every other consideration that concerned himself, was forgotten. He waited till she was restored to a sense of recollection, and when her servants and a carriage came to carry her home, forgetful of the ignominy with which he had been cast out of her house in Paris, he followed to her residence and entered with the anxiety of a brother.

The moment that Bellina perceived him,

for while she was in the coffee-house, surrounded by the medical assistants, he kept out of view, she was extremely disturbed; but understanding that it was to him she was indebted for being disentangled from the carriage, she held out her hand to him, and said, “ Ah, Castagnello, where have you come from, and to help me in such a moment ?”

The accent in which this was said, transported the unfortunate adventurer out of himself, and he knelt down at the side of her couch and respectfully kissed her proffered hand.

Although we have thus briefly stated this incident, it consumed several hours, during which the boat, with the servants and luggage, had gone off to the vessel, and the patience of Lord Wildwaste was exhausted. Still he was desirous to wait; the conduct of his brother had been highly satisfactory during the short time he had lived with him in Palermo, and he was reluctant to believe that on the very moment of em-

barkation, he could be so indiscreet as to forfeit the confidence which he seemed so anxious to acquire. But midnight passed, and Castagnello was not yet come ; the boat had been several times to and fro between the vessel and the Marina : the servants had been as often at the house, but could obtain no tidings. Yet still Lord Wildwaste hesitated to allow the anchor to be weighed, especially when informed that the last time his brother had been seen, was assisting the Princess Bordiro, who had been thrown out of her carriage in the Via Toledo.

The day dawned, and the breeze, which had all night been from the land, and favourable for the vessel's departure from the bay of Palermo, as the sun rose, died away, and the master of the vessel declared that from the appearance of the morning, he had no doubt the wind would set in from the sea, and prevent them from sailing till the evening. This information ruffled a little the temper of the Earl, who was irritated

by the delay of his brother ; but he resolved to go again on shore and seek for him, which he did accordingly.

Meanwhile Castagnello had remained till a late hour at the palace of the Prince Bordiro, in total neglect of all he had at stake. The Princess, though much hurt by the accident, had received no dangerous contusion ; but the Baron Mareschini, who was in the carriage with her, had suffered a severe fracture in both his limbs and one of his arms. He had been brought soon after the Princess to the palace ; for in addition to being the particular friend of the Prince, he had also the felicity to be her Cicesbeo, and Castagnello was stung with grief and jealousy on learning enough to convince him that this was the case.

The interview with Bellina, which in other circumstances might have tended to confirm the desire to rectify his errors, only agitated him with feelings and passions that troubled and overthrew all his resolutions of amendment. He no longer regarded Bellina as that chaste and gentle creature

which she had hitherto been to his imagination, but he thought of her, as if in committing the infidelity so common to her countrywomen, she had done himself a personal wrong. This resentful sentiment converted the affection which he had always borne towards her into a fierce and sensual passion, the gratification of which he thought would indemnify him for that ignominy which he had suffered when he first ventured to speak to her of love. Of the Prince, her husband, who was then so devoted to her beauty, he learnt that he had become one of the most dissipated men in Palermo, and cared as little about the conduct of his wife as it was well possible for any husband to do.

About midnight Castagnello left the palace, and in going down the Via Toledo, disturbed with his thick-coming and conflicting fancies, he debated with himself whether he should accompany his brother to Genoa. "What am I to do there?" said the unfortunate man to himself—"If he asks me to go with him to London, what

will become of me among the English? I cannot enter into their army, their laws do not allow it, and I am qualified for nothing. If my brother will settle on me an annual stipend, the same sum that would barely keep me in the condition of a gentleman among his countrymen, will be lordly affluence in Palermo. I will not go with him—I will remain here—I can enjoy myself as richly in Sicily as in any country in the world; there is no capital in Europe where pleasure is more worshipped than in Palermo—and Bellina is here—here I will remain.”

In this frame of mind he had walked down to the Porto Felice, and to the steps at the Marina, where he expected to find the boat waiting, and by which he intended to go on board and communicate his determination to the Earl. But it happened that he reached the spot during the interval of one of those trips which in waiting for him the boat had made to and from the vessel, and she was not there. He saw, however, the vessel at anchor, and he re-

solved to walk on the Marina till the boat should be sent back, which he doubted not would be the case as soon as the ship got under way.

It was a late hour to be on the Marina alone, but it was a beautiful night. The moon was high and clear in her journey, the sea shone like molten silver beneath her beams; the mountains, particularly Monte Pelegrino, seemed to stand out more pre-eminently to view than even by day-light, and the outline of the domes and palaces of the city appeared not only unusually distinct against the deep clear azure of the skies, but to shine as if it had been traced with a pale and lambent light.

As Castagnello walked along, he soon perceived that he was not the only one abroad tasting, at that silent and solemn hour, the cooling freshness of the moonlight air. When he had walked about a hundred yards, he came up with an old man, seemingly by his sighs and interjections, occupied with unhappy thoughts. Castagnello, however, passed him without

speaking, but he had not advanced far when the old man called to him for the love of God to stop.

Castagnello halted, and the stranger coming up, enquired if he knew whether the English Lord intended to sail that night.

Surprised at this question, he answered in the affirmative, enquiring at the same time why the question had been asked.

“Alas!” said the stranger, “then I fear it is too late; for doubtless all are on board.”

The accent of sorrow in which this was expressed, moved the best cord in the bosom of Castagnello, and he enquired with solicitude into the cause of the old man’s emotion.

“O it is not for myself that I am grieved,” was the reply; “but there is a poor unhappy youth at my house dying, and whose constant moan is for the neglectful Castagnello, the friend of that English Lord. Could I but see this Castagnello, perhaps he would give me something to appease the despair of the wretched Salpano.”

“ I am myself that Castagnello,” exclaimed our hero. “ Where is the poor creature? Conduct me to him ; he does me wrong in thinking I had neglected him.”

The Sicilian, delighted with an encounter so unhopèd for, lost not a moment in leading the way towards his house. It was situated, in a low narrow street, in the upper part of the town, and behind the gentle activity on which the palace of the viceroy stands, so that it was some time before they reached the door. But what passed in conversation on the way thither, will be related in our next chapter.

CHAPTER V.



Oh! in that hour when from this earthly scene,
Reluctant life bids the fond clay adieu,
Around the couch draw close the awful screen,
And hide their ghastly parting from all view.

G. HALITON.

THE old man gave the following account of Salpano.

“About a fortnight ago, Signor, as I was one evening sitting at my door smoking a segar, and thinking on my past life, as I always do at the close of the day, wondering by what strange turns of fortune, I have been so long provided with the means of living, though but in a stinted measure, a young man, with a box under his arm, passed by, with a quick pace and a wild look. Our street is narrow, and it is closed at the one end. He went to that end, and turned back evidently more agitated than

before. His appearance struck me: he had a simple recluse look, and he was evidently in great distress. Friend, said I, you seem to have lost your way, and you appear very tired; rest yourself a little beside me, and I will afterwards set you right. At these words he came towards me like a lost dog that has found one whom he would like for a master. He placed his box on the ground, and taking hold of my hand, kissed it with the reverence of a sinner to a saint.

“Where are you going?” said I: but he answered not; he only shook his head, and expanding his arms, looked the very picture of one woe begone, and wild with despair. “Are you a Sicilian?” for I thought he was some stranger, who understood not our language, and at these words he cried, “I was, but I know not what I am now! I am lost! I am friendless! Heaven has deserted me: I can only now die.”

“I spoke to him kindly, and requested him to sit down beside me, which he did as if he knew not what he was doing, and began to sob and weep bitterly. This,

Signor, was very unmanly, but yet at the time, it seemed more to come from the simplicity of his heart than the weakness of his character.

“I enquired into the cause of his grief, and he replied, in an incoherent manner, “O! ask me not—I have been enchanted—I have been in bad company—Satan has had dominion over me—the powers of heaven and hell have been at war with me, and between them I have been lost, for I am innocent of any crime, and yet I am ruined for ever. My fame is destroyed in the bud—the harvest of my glory cut off in the blight that has fallen on my opening!”

“I allowed him to run on in this manner, until he had so exhausted himself, that he, in consequence, became calmer, and I at last learnt that he lost his little all at the gaming table, to which he had been allured to return, in the fallacious hope of recovering his first losses. I invited him to stop all night in my house, and tried what I could to sooth his distress, and appease the upbraidings of his own mind, but without

success. Benevolence, however, obliged me to constrain him to remain, but no effort of kindness could recall him from the despondency into which he had fallen.

“ I became alarmed for the unhappy youth, for he did nothing but wring his hands, and give way to his forebodings. All the night he lay wakeful, sighing, and wretched; and in the morning, when he rose, instead of being interested by the objects to which the day-light gave cheerfulness, he sat in an obscure corner, dropped his clasped hands between his legs, and hung his head in a state of the most deplorable dejection.

“ This could not endure long. Towards the afternoon his lips became parched, and his face flushed with fever: a draught of cold water was all he could taste, and with scarcely more sustenance he has continued in the same state ever since; but nature is exhausted; the oil of life is burnt out, and the lamp, by pale and feeble flashes, shows that it will soon expire.”

The old man had, during this narration,

conducted Castagnello to his door. "Tread softly," said he, "as you enter, lest you disturb the last moments of the miserable youth."

Castagnello needed no admonition to do this. His own feelings were wrought up to a painful pitch; he breathed with difficulty, and his footsteps fell softly on the ground, from some unconscious action of the mind.

The room into which he was conducted was large and lofty, but the walls were exceedingly mean: the rafters and ceiling were blackened by flies and smoke, and in one corner of the apartment stood an humble couch; a table was placed near it, on which stood an apothecary's phial, a rude earthenware pitcher, and a brazen lamp. On the opposite side of the bed sat an old woman, the wife of Buretti, the landlord. In her one hand she held a ragged handkerchief, with which she wiped the lips of the patient, while with the other she supported his head.

Castagnello had often seen death in battle, on the plains of Africa, but never by disease. He was awfully shaken when he looked at the emaciated Salpano, whose eyes had deeply sunk into their sockets; his nose was pinched into a dreadful anatomy, his mouth frightfully distended, and his upper teeth horribly protuberant. The dead rattle was loud in his throat.

The signals of death were too strikingly manifested to render the situation of the ill-fated poet doubtful; but although the powers of articulation were destroyed, the expression which floated over his countenance when he turned his glassy eyes towards Castagnello, showed that he recognized him. The outcast, horror-struck, was unable to move, but continued to gaze on him, as if under the influence of the greatest terror. The dying man, panting and heaving, and turning and catching at the bed clothes, as if grasping and groping for life, again discovered him, and made a wild and haggard effort to raise himself up in

bed. The effort exhausted his strength. It was convulsive : he raised his head and neck, and uttering a troubled, and hollow, and sepulchral sound, stretched himself out, and shivering from head to foot, expired.

Castagnello staggered back three or four paces, and hid his face against the wall of the room. In this situation he continued some time, stunned with what he had witnessed ; but, after a short time, he recovered his presence of mind, and giving the woman his purse, for, in the meantime, the old man had gone into another apartment, he hastily withdrew from the house.

On going into the street, the day was beginning to dawn, and he recollected the strange impression which his long absence must have made on his brother, and accordingly, as soon as he regained the *Via Toledo*, he hastened once more to the *Marina*. On reaching the *Porto Felice*, he saw a boat coming from the vessel, and by the time that he got to the landing place the sun was up, and Lord Wildwaste, evidently much

disturbed in his temper, was stepping out of the boat. Castagnello, unconscious of having done any evil, but only anxious to explain the cause of his absence, ran to assist his brother, but the Earl angrily repulsed his hand, and leaping on shore, walked towards the house where they had lodged, leaving the unfortunate outcast greatly disturbed by this indignant reception.

CHAPTER VI.



There ne'er was charity in such a look,
In such a soft and sleepy dark blue eye,
Go to! Go to! Thou shalt not be my bride.

THE FATAL CHOICE.

IN the meantime the Count Corneli had left Palermo, and settled for a time at Florence, where he became acquainted with Lord Kenelsmore, an Irish nobleman, who resided there with his family on account of the health of the Countess, a delicate woman, to whom a change of climate had been prescribed, with scarcely more need to her constitution than to the fortune of her husband.

Their family consisted of two daughters; the eldest a finished Irish beauty, majestic and luxuriant in her personal graces, full of spirit and intelligence, bold in her demeanour, but withal so chaste and noble that

it was impossible to see her, without admiring her beauty, or to be acquainted with her without loving her mind. Her sister was altogether different; she was beautiful too, but in another way. Her form was round, full, and voluptuous; her eyes were sweet, modest, and gentle, and there was a softness in her voice that bespoke a mind tuned to sensibility; but whether physical or moral was a question with a German philosopher who had seen them at Paris, and who pronounced the frank and dashing Lady Geraldine, the eldest, a woman of natural modesty, but the mild and sensitive Lady Alicia a devil incarnate. Upon what grounds the doctor Ivilsnach formed his opinion of these two young ladies, so much at variance with that of the rest of the world, we shall leave the reader to discover from the sequel.

Corneli, on being introduced by Lord Kenelsmore to the Countess and his daughters, was much struck with their singular beauty, particularly with the Juno-like figure of Lady Geraldine, and in the

course of a few visits, with but short intervals between, it was evident to every body that he was her most devoted admirer. But his attentions were no less obviously disagreeable to the lady, who took every opportunity of marking her dislike of his assiduities. His elegant person and manners, had, however, a very different effect on her sister, who, notwithstanding the softness and apparent modesty of her character, showed so decided a partiality for the Count, that she could, with difficulty, conceal the passion which agitated her bosom. Lady Geraldine, who possessed great intellectual endowments, and a remarkable acute discernment, discovered, what she termed, the weakness of her sister, and endeavoured to recall her to a sense of the chaste dignity of her sex. She represented to her, in very strong terms, their father's accidental acquaintance with Corneli; the mystery in which he appeared to be involved, having come from Palermo without any introductions to the resident nobility at Florence, and being

only known to the Neapolitan minister at the Ducal court, by his rank and title, and she urged her to suppress a passion, which, even towards an unexceptionable object, it would be a breach of female decorum to shew.

Alicia denied that she entertained any particular affection for Corneli, and ascribed the remonstrances of her sister to jealousy. The penetrating mind of Geraldine was alarmed at the artfulness of this reprisal; but her innocence and inexperience afforded no light to explain the mystery. She had never before thought Alicia cunning, although she had often been dissatisfied with her reserve; nor, indeed, could her lofty and noble spirit enter into the sinister wiles of that sensual demon, with which her sister was possessed. She had expected that her advice would have drawn from Alicia a confession of her folly, and a determination to subdue her passion, and she was grieved to sadness to find her not only so anxious to conceal it, but herself suspected of jealousy, even

while her antipathy towards Corneli had been on all occasions most unequivocally shown. From that moment she distrusted the integrity of her sister, and in her own mind resolved to watch her with vigilance and severity, as well as to mark the effect which her conduct might have on Corneli. She would, indeed, (so convinced was she of the impropriety of Alicia's notions) have urged her father to quit Florence, but she could not do so without assigning a cause, and her high mindedness would not permit her to stoop to employ fiction, even in aid of duty, far less to injure her sister by mentioning what was, perhaps, only owing to her own fears and suspicions.

Matters were in this state in the Kenelsmore family, when the Earl of Wildwaste arrived from Palermo, where he had left Castagnello. It was, as we have stated, his Lordship's intention to have proceeded to Genoa, but contrary winds had baffled this design, and he landed at Leghorn, where, being informed by his banker that

the Kenelsmore family were at Florence, he immediately set out to join them.

The Countess of Kenelsmore was the cousin of Lord Wildwaste's mother, but it was not the tie of relationship that induced his Lordship to hasten so speedily to visit them. He had heard much of the young ladies, but was personally unknown to them; Lady Geraldine he had accidentally seen, without being introduced to her, at a party in London, on the night prior to his departure from England, and had retained a lively remembrance of her elegant air and majestic appearance; insomuch that when he heard of her being in Italy, he determined that if he found her accomplishments at all corresponding to the graces of her person, to offer her his hand.

As we are not writing the adventures of his Lordship, it is only necessary to state that he was, soon after his arrival at Florence, the accepted lover of Lady Geraldine. The vanity of Count Corneli had been piqued by the contemptuous manner in which she had rejected his fraudulent

addresses, and he longed for an opportunity to retaliate what he deemed her insolence ; but soon after the arrival of the Earl of Wildwaste, the doors of Lord Kenelsmore's residence were shut against him ; for, on hearing his name, the Earl mentioned to the family what his brother had told him respecting the abandonment of his wife to the robbers in the catacombs, and Lord Kenelsmore justly indignant that, although a married man, he had dared to pay the attentions of a lover to his daughter, instantly resolved that all intercourse with him should cease.

This information concerning the character of Count Corneli, afforded pleasure to Lady Geraldine, though she was vexed to think that the degradation of any one should to her be matter of satisfaction. She could not, however, but feel pleased that the instinctive antipathy with which in her purity she regarded him, was thus justified by his real character ; but the chief source of her satisfaction was in the

hope that her sister would see the danger of a passion that could no longer be cherished without sin. As for Corneli, his passion, or rather his desire to be revenged on the haughtiness of Lady Geraldine, suffered no abatement.

It happened, however, one night that Lord Kenelsmore's carriage got entangled with his, and was overturned as it drew up at the portico of the Opera-house for the ladies, who were waiting to step in. Corneli immediately alighted and offered them his, which the Countess would have declined, but the pressure of the crowd, and something of that habit of civility which arises from intercourse, overcame her reluctance, and she complied with his earnest solicitation; for he affected not to perceive that the ladies wished to treat him as an unknown stranger. But if the cold politeness of the Countess and the majesty of Lady Geraldine repulsed his advances, he perceived with the delight of a discovery the interest which he had

unconsciously acquired in the breast of the blushing Alicia; and with the exultation of a demon, he gloated on his victim as he assisted her into the carriage.

In a short time after, the worst fears that Lady Geraldine had entertained of her sister were confirmed. The unhappy Alicia, bewitched by her guilty passion, fell an easy prey to the vindictive libertine, who gloried in her ruin as the most summary and complete revenge he could obtain over the majestic purity of her sister, and that arrogance of virtue in her family which had broken off their intercourse with him.

But the fatal lapse of Alicia was not immediately discovered, and she had acted as bride's-maid to her sister long before any doubt was thrown on her maiden purity, although the rose on her cheek had given place to the lily, and the languor of maternal symptoms had come in the stead of that soft sleepiness of character which betrayed the latent voluptuousness of her disposition.

Soon after their marriage, Lord and Lady Wildwaste set out for England, and fortunately for the sensibility of her Ladyship, before the guilt of her sister was found out.

CHAPTER VII.



Ah ! wherefore am I thus presumptuous deem'd ?
The blood that fills thy veins enriches mine ;
From the same stock we spring ; though by that glance
Of thy disdainful eyes too well I see
My birth thou countest base.

ORRA.

ON the evening prior to the departure of Lord and Lady Wildwaste from Florence, on their return to England, his Lordship received a letter from Castagnello, soliciting some pecuniary assistance, with many expressions of unfeigned contrition for his misconduct. But the circumstances that attended their separation at Palermo, had induced his Lordship to cast him off for ever. He however consulted Lord Kenelsmore, who, after hearing an outline of Castagnello's adventures, advised Wildwaste to send him a remittance sufficient

to enable him to come to Florence, where on his arrival his Lordship promised, on ascertaining what the outcast was fit for, to get him interested in some way of life that would gradually wean him from his evil propensities. This arrangement being settled, the bride and bridegroom went to their native country, and Lord Kenelsmore wrote to Castagnello with the money, requesting him to come away from Palermo. But it is necessary that we should now revert to what took place there.

Castagnello being repulsed by his brother when landing, retired along the Marina alone. He was conscious in this instance that he had done no wrong, but the memory of his past misconduct, and the awful spectacle that he had witnessed in the death of the poor Salpano, produced in his breast a humiliated feeling. He did not actually weep; but a sorrow bigger than tears could express swelled within his bosom, and he felt himself as it were lost for ever.

After a few turns the paroxysm of these violent emotions subsided, and on consulting with his better judgment, though it was a bitter pill to swallow, he resolved to go again to his brother. "If," said he however, "the ties of kindred are so easily broken between relations so near, and towards one so dependent as I am on my brother, the world is not worth the trouble of being virtuous. Nevertheless I will go back to him—I will convince him that I am at least desirous of being virtuous in the way of the world, whether that be virtue or not, and if he reject me, for I have no other way but through him of redeeming my faults, I will submit. The sin of ruin will be with him or with destiny—I will mend if I can—I will endeavour to become what is esteemed good, and if I fail, the fault is not mine—God help me!"

After this humble and pathetic soliloquy, the outcast sought the residence of his brother, and walked at once into the room

where Lord Wildwaste had thrown himself upon a couch.

“What do you want here?” said his Lordship, harshly.

“Nothing,” replied Castagnello, humbly.

“Then what do you do in this room?” replied his Lordship.

“I would see my brother,” answered Castagnello, in a tremulous voice.

“A pretty sort of brother, indeed,” said his Lordship, sarcastically—“a pretty sort of brother.”

“I would entreat, implore his aid”—was the meek answer of the outcast.

“What new crime have you committed that you would thus ask his influence,” exclaimed the Earl, indignantly.

Castagnello made no reply—he sighed deeply—he thought it strange that having committed no fault he should be thus harshly treated, and he sat silent. But such is the evil consequences of iniquity; when we have erred, all is error that we afterwards do—our very virtues bear wit-

ness against us. How awful is the lesson that is taught the innocent, in the contempt and abhorrence that attends the guilty!

“Castagnello,” said his Lordship, after waiting some time for an answer—“Castagnello, I am sorry that you have not merited the friendship I have shown you.”—

This was as a clap of thunder to the wretched convict, but he replied with astonishing firmness—“I did not know, my Lord, that I owed your kindness to any merit—I thought it proceeded from a sense of duty, and I was only at a loss to know whether from the obligations of gratitude for having saved your life, or from the knowledge that we are the children of the same father. O my Lord, my brother—I have been much in fault—I have committed many errors, which had I possessed your birth-right, would never have been suspected of any crime. But, my Lord, although I have erred—although I have been connected with crime, it is harsh in you to rebuke me thus. You have not

been tried, not been tempted as I have been—O, you have never felt, as I have felt, the wish that I feel to prove worthy of any kindness that the good and great may be pleased to show.”

“ This is rant,” said Lord Wildwaste, pettishly—“ this is not sincere ; you are an artful hypocrite, Castagnello.”

“ You are a villain,” exclaimed Castagnello, in a rage, “ and when my soul is burning on the brimstone shores of hell, it will be summoned to the gates of heaven to bear witness against the virtueless decorum of your conduct.”

This was more than the British peer could endure ; he started from his couch, and ordered Castagnello to quit the house.

Overwhelmed with sorrow, the wretched Castagnello departed, and wandering almost unconscious of the road he took, found himself at the door of the house where the poor Salpano had breathed his last.

He hesitated for some time, and perhaps would have gone away, but the landlady observed him, and begged he would come

in. She conducted him to the room where the corpse was laid out on the couch. The form of the face had undergone no change, but the hands were fearfully shrivelled and withered. They had the appearance of those of extreme old age, while the face was but little altered.

Castagnello sat down by the body and wept with extreme anguish. "Thy days," he exclaimed, looking at Salpano's body, "have been few, but thou art more happy than I am; a blameless name, if thou art unhonoured, attends thy exit—and those that knew thee weep for thy death. Who will weep for me, for I am not blameless? Who will lament me, for none shall miss me?"

In the meantime Lord Wildwaste reflected on what had passed between him and Castagnello, and he felt somewhat uneasy when he thought of some of the words he had employed. He however consoled himself in a very legitimate manner with the idea that Castagnello was but a bastard, and had been bred up in a

loose way, and cared little about those sort of things which are so honourable in regular life ; still he was not quite satisfied all day long that the outcast should not make his appearance. He would have been glad to have seen him, and to have taken him with him to Genoa, and to have done something for him, but still the outcast did not make his appearance. This course of reflection was not, however, barren ; he inclosed, before embarking again in the evening, an order on his banker for a respectable sum, in favour of Castagnello, and he wrote a note to be delivered to him, in which he expressed his regret that he could not controul his indiscretions.

CHAPTER VIII.



Stop here and let him pass; see ye not that,—
Beneath his cloak he grasps a dagger drawn
Ready to strike; and from his murderous eye
The fiery demon of perdition scowls.
Let's watch and mark—

G. HALITON.

THE extraordinary alternations of feeling to which Castagnello had been subjected during so short a period, overpowered his strength, and the same night in which his brother sailed from Palermo, he was seized with a violent fever, and laid delirious on the humble couch from which the body of Salpano was removed for burial by the friars of a neighbouring monastery. In this state he remained several days.

In the course however of a fortnight he was so far recovered as to be able to sit

up. He had noticed while he lay on his sick bed, the unremitting kindness of the old man and his wife, and that they had procured for him the advantage of medical assistance; and he thought himself bound to reward their spontaneous benevolence. It was for this object that he humbled himself to address a letter to his brother, soliciting some pecuniary aid. The letter he sent to his Lordship's banker, and the messenger who carried it was requested by the banker to deliver to him the note which Lord Wildwaste had left, and to say he would be glad to see him.

By this circumstance Castagnello was placed, earlier than he expected, in a condition to indulge his generosity, and the strength of his constitution soon mastering the debility which his illness had produced, he was in the course of a few days after able to walk out.

His first excursion was to the Bordiro Palace; but although the Prince was negligent of the dishonour that he suffered by the friend whom his wife had chosen

for her Cicesbeo, he could not endure the thought of such a mere adventurer as Castagnello being admitted even as a guest to her assemblies; accordingly when the outcast presented himself at the gate, the porter denied him admittance. Sickness and care and misfortune had done much to tame the spirit of Castagnello, and he turned away from the palace with a humiliated and full heart.

“I will not live the life I have done,” he exclaimed to himself, as he returned to the lodgings to which he had removed from the humble abode of the humane old couple. “I will quit Palermo, I will seek my brother, I will fall at his feet and implore him to save me.”

To this determination he adhered; he sent immediately to enquire if there was any vessel in the port for Genoa, conceiving Lord Wildwaste had gone to that city as he had intended, and he was informed that one was on the point of sailing. He embarked immediately, and on the third day after was landed on the mole of Genoa. He

enquired for the merchant to whom he knew his Lordship carried letters of credit, and with a beating heart walked to his house to learn his address.

On being told that his Lordship had not come to Genoa, but having been constrained by contrary winds, had landed at Leghorn and proceeded to Florence, where he then was, Castagnello felt the chill of disappointment, and retired with a melancholy foreboding that he was fated to still greater dishonour and misfortune. This gloomy presentiment paralised his mind, and instead of going immediately to Florence as he ought to have done, he hired an obscure lodging on the skirts of the city, and retired as if he waited the coming on of some unknown but inevitable calamity. His health, however, was gradually improving, and with the renovation of vigour his native cheerfulness was restored.

In the meantime his money was wearing down ; but in all this time he had committed no indiscretion, and he began to be pleased with himself. In this comfortable

mood he resolved to go to Florence, where he was informed his brother still was, and on the eve of marriage with Lady Geraldine. This information he obtained from the merchant to whom he had applied to know, without disclosing himself, whether his Lordship still continued in Italy.

But his destiny could not be controuled. He set out the next morning, and reached the Tuscan capital on the evening of the second day after the departure of Lord and Lady Wildwaste for England.

While he was enquiring for his brother at Lord Kenelsmore's gate, one of the domestics who had been with him in Sicily, and who was left behind to accompany his Lordship's collection of pictures and antiquities home by sea, happened to see him, and informed the household of his name and relationship. The Countess of Kenelsmore, on learning this circumstance, desired him to be shown in. She had heard part of his history, and was anxious to see him. Her Ladyship at the time was sitting with Alicia, whose faded beauty and sink-

ing spirits had begun to excite her maternal anxiety, but she never suspected the ignominious cause.

As Castagnello entered, the ladies rose to receive him, which the Countess did with much cordiality, and introduced him to her daughter. The eye of a stranger will often discover peculiarities which familiars overlook. The outcast was struck with the appearance of Lady Alicia, and when he understood she was not married, which he learnt in the course of conversation, he eyed her so sharply and suspiciously, that she could not but perceive what was passing in his mind. In this crisis Lord Kenelsmore came in, and expressed himself so glad to see Castagnello, that our unfortunate hero began to think the ebbing tide which had left him so far on a dreary shoal, was beginning to turn, and might yet bear him happily into port. His Lordship invited him to supper, and added that as he wished to have some particular conversation with him respecting his future life, they would for that night sup by themselves.

On his way back to his inn from the residence of Lord Kenelsmore, it happened that the carriage of Count Corneli passed, and Castagnello immediately recognised the person of the Count, who had also seen him, and had shrunk into the corner to avoid his eye. By one of those inscrutable operations of the mind, which beget in us thoughts that we can never account for, Castagnello instantly associated the image of the Count with that of Lady Alicia; and with no other reason for the notion, he suspected that her deplorable situation was occasioned by that accomplished libertine.

All thoughts of himself were swallowed up in this singular fancy, and the remainder of the day he spent in tracing on what footing the Count was with the Kenelsmore family. The result of his enquiries strengthened his suspicion, and he was determined to discover the whole mystery. But chance superseded all the stratagems that he intended to practice.

On going in the evening to sup with Lord Kenelsmore, he perceived a man

wrapped in a Spanish cloak, walking before him ; and by the light of a small lamp that stood opposite to the image of a saint at the corner of a street, he discovered, as the stranger turned, the features of Corneli. It was evident from his disguise that the Count did not wish to be known, and Castagnello conjectured, as he seemed to be walking also towards the house of Lord Kenelsmore, that he was going to meet Lady Alicia. It was now near his Lordship's supper hour, but the interest which the outcast took in this adventure, outweighed every other consideration, and he determined to see the result.

The Count walked straight on to the portal of the mansion, and was admitted by the porter, to whom he gave money, and who was evidently subservient to his designs. Castagnello allowed him to enter, and then also went forward. Instead, however, of ascending the great staircase which led from the inner court to the state apartments, he contrived to linger in the court, and soon perceived the Count ad-

mitted at a low door which opened at the foot of a narrow staircase. This ascent led to an open gallery over the state rooms, and along which the bed-chambers of the family were arranged. While Castagnello stood in the court, he saw one of the doors open, and by the light of a lamp within, he discovered that it was opened by Lady Alicia; in less than a minute after, the Count having ascended the stairs, was seen in the gallery conducted by a female to her Ladyship.

This discovery so affected Castagnello, that he felt unable to ascend to the supper room. He was at a loss what to do, and while he thus hesitated, he heard the door above again open, and on looking up saw, by the light within, the Count come forward to the front of the gallery, and throw something down into the court; but which, instead of reaching the pavement, fell into the basin of a fountain that played in the centre of the court. Castagnello instinctively darted forward and plunging his hand into the water, found a phial, the

contents of which had been emptied. A horrible thought glared athwart his imagination, and he staggered gasping from the fountain with the phial in his hand as if he had been stunned by a sudden blow. In this situation he was not, however, allowed to remain long; for the Count hearing some one moving in the court, and dreading detection, hurried down the private staircase, and springing out from the door, by the connivance of the porter at the gate, effected his escape before Castagnello was able to articulate any sound of alarm.

CHAPTER IX.



Chide not too harshly that poor erring soul,
But thank the gods for your untampt virtue.

THE PENITENT.

CASTAGNELLO did not want presence of mind, but the mystery, the phial, and the frightful thoughts that it suggested had overcome him. When he saw, however, the Count escape beyond his reach, he reflected on what he ought to do. His first idea was to apprise Lord Kenelsmore of what he had seen, and to mention what he feared; but, on second thoughts, he considered that he ought not to interfere, and upon this he acted. He put the phial in his pocket, and calmly ascending the great staircase, entered the hall where the groom of the chambers was in waiting, and conducted him to the Earl's study.

Castagnello had not greatly exceeded

his time, but Lord Kenelsmore being remarkably punctual to his engagements, was displeased that he should have been so tardy, and received him coldly compared with the friendliness of his demeanour in the morning. This, with the scene that he had witnessed, embarrassed the ill-fated Castagnello, and when the Earl alluded to his delay, hoping it had not been occasioned by any engagement with indiscreet acquaintance, in attempting to make the best apology he could, his voice faltered, he blushed, and became confused. The Earl immediately interpreted his agitation unfavourably, and said, in a stern and haughty tone, "It is of no use to trouble oneself with a man so wedded to his vices."

"I am not worse," replied the outcast firmly, "than many who wear the appearance of more virtue. But the sins of my youth, although past, still leave their shadows behind, and they darken to the hue of guilt every thing that befalls me."

There was nothing in this sentence to

give offence, but Lord Kenelsmore was of a quick temper, and not knowing well what reply to make, grew angry. Castagnello endured his injustice with some degree of patience, till his Lordship contemptuously alluded to his mother, by saying, "he was only fit for a player." "This is not to be borne," cried the indignant outcast. "Look to your own house, my Lord, there may be as much dishonour, and greater crimes in it, even now, than either my mother or her miserable son have yet known."

The anger of his Lordship flamed out into a dreadful conflagration at this insolence, as he called it, and he raised his hand in a menacing attitude. Castagnello flung it aside contemptuously, and hastened to quit the room. In the same moment several of the domestics who had heard the contention, and who had learnt from Lord Wildwaste's servant, who had been in Sicily, something of the character of Castagnello, came rushing into the room, and seized him by the arms. Lord Kenelsmore, in

the frenzy of passion, declared that Castagnello had struck him, and ordered him to be taken to the police office.

The servants also declared that they had seen him aim a blow, so that next morning, when the wretched young man was carried before the criminal tribunal, he was sentenced to a month's hard labour in the streets. It is probable that Lord Kenelsmore, when he came to reflect on all the circumstances, would have used his influence to procure a mitigation of the sentence, but a distressing event in his own family overwhelmed him with anxiety and sorrow.

In the course of the night, after the servants had so forcibly dragged Castagnello to the police office, Lady Alicia was taken ill. She would not, for some time, allow any medical aid to be procured, but the alarm of the Countess became excessive at some of the symptoms, and in a state little short of distraction she quitted her daughter's room. Immediately after this, two medical gentle-

men were sent for, and when they had seen the patient and administered some medicine, they consulted in private together. It was evident to all the servants that they were at a loss what to say, and also that they considered the patient in great danger. In the course of a short time, however, the violence of her symptoms abated, and she herself appeared happily delivered from apprehension.— But the medical attendants were not so well satisfied with her situation, and one of them remained all night by her bedside. Towards morning she was feverish, attended with slight coruscations of delirium, in which she spoke often of Count Corneli, and hoped it was not poison that he had persuaded her to swallow.

Her mother never returned to her room, nor enquired concerning her, although Alicia had been always considered her favourite daughter. But she wept bitterly and would not be consoled. The fever gained ground, and on the third day the doctors informed the Earl that they had no

hope. "What is her disease?" said the afflicted father.

The doctors looked at each other as if the one left it to the other to explain, both evidently embarrassed. At last one of them replied,

"The immediate cause of danger is fever and inflammation."

The Earl sighed, and the doctors bowed and withdrew. The same night the beautiful Alicia breathed her last. Her father was sunk into the deepest sorrow, and delighted to dwell on the remembrance of her grace and virtues, but the Countess instantly appeared quieted. The death of her daughter seemed indeed to have relieved her mind of a heavy load, but a deep and mining care took possession of her bosom, and preyed upon her own delicate health. It was not till about a year after, when she lay on her death bed at Naples, whither she had been removed for a milder climate during winter, that she disclosed to the Earl the woeful discovery she had made of her daughter's dishonour and guilt.

The Earl then remembered the words of Castagnello, and, in the reflections which they occasioned, suffered, perhaps, as much as the outcast did in the unmerited ignominy of his punishment.

CHAPTER X.



As I stood lonely on the sounding shore,
At the bright noon of day ; then, even then,
Methought I saw behind me on the sand,
The awful shadow of some dreadful thing,
That earned dominion o'er me.

OLD PLAY.

CASTAGNELLO having performed the ignominious drudgery of his sentence, was set at liberty, and immediately quitted Florence. He travelled on foot to Rome, determined to become a novice in the college of the Propaganda, in order to qualify himself for a mission to some remote people. But an accident which occurred when within a few miles of the eternal city, changed again the complexion of his fortune. He had slept the preceding night at a small winehouse, about two miles short of the first post-house from Rome, and

rising before day-break, he had walked briskly on alone. It was a beautiful morning. The bright silvery dawn spread rapidly over the Eastern sky, and the stars which shone with unusual brilliancy went out one by one, till only the brightest remained, and that too also disappeared as the sun, round, full, and golden, rose over the campagna of Rome. The air was deliciously serene, not a flake of vapour dimmed the crystalline purity of the heavens, and soft tranquillity seemed almost visibly diffused over the landscape. The whole aspect of nature was calculated to lighten and elevate the spirits, but the silence and the waste around touched the feelings with a sentiment of solemnity and sorrow. -

Castagnello, a little fatigued with his walk, and oppressed with the awfulness of the scene, sat down on a stone, and cast his eyes forward. In the midst of an open champaign country he beheld the sublime dome of St. Peter's rising towards the heavens, over a slight floating haze, the

exhaling dew, which veiled the less noble features of the city. The remembrance of the feelings with which he had first seen that majestic object came rushing upon him; the spectres of all that had since befallen him flitted past in tumultuous succession, and his imagination, overawed by a fearful foreboding, saw in a cloud that followed, a visionary hand pointing to them, as if the future was yet big with many events similar to those he had already endured. He had no longer any confidence in Fortune, his hopes had been all blasted, his life rendered infamous; the charm of human existence was dissolved. It was not within the power of fate or chance to repair the lapse that he had suffered, and he looked at his wrists on which the marks of the fetters he had so lately worn were yet new.

As he indulged himself in these gloomy reflections, he started from his seat, and glancing behind, rushed about half a dozen paces forward, cowering with alarm and

horror. He thought that he had discovered the shadow of some supernatural form hovering over him, nor was he for some time persuaded that the eternal enemy had not been visibly near. "But why should I be afraid of him?" he, in a moment after, exclaimed with demoniac blasphemy—"We are doomed to dwell together. I am given to him. I was made for him. It is my fate."

In this terrible crisis, the sound of a pastoral bell was heard at a little distance, and on looking towards the spot from whence it arose, he discovered a few goats coming out of the ruins of an ancient building, followed by a man whose rude and shaggy attire naturally excited ideas of robbery and murder.

On seeing Castagnello, the goatherd came sternly on towards him, and when he had reached within about half-a-dozen yards of him ordered him to halt, and eyed him sharply from head to foot. "Let me look at these hands of your's," said he somewhat curiously, and Castagnello show-

ed them and his wrists marked by the fetters.

The goatherd laughed harshly, and he more closely examined the marks, and then shook him heartily by the hand.

“ Brother,” said he, “ there is no need for any further introduction; last year mine were no better, but they are now honest-like again: come with me into my habitation.”

Castagnello, in silence and surprize, followed him into the ruins, in a corner of which a rude hut was constructed. “ If you choose,” said the goatherd, “ this may be your home also: don’t be ashamed of it.”

He then opened the door, which he warily fastened behind him, and lifting up the lid of a large antique carved chest, which appeared to be filled with goat skins, said, “ This is the way to your bed chamber.”

Having removed some of the skins, the top of a ladder was laid bare, and it now appeared that part of the bottom of the

chest was removable, and that it stood over an opening to a vault.

“Descend you first,” said the goatherd, and Castagnello went down the ladder, while the other lowered the lid of the chest upon them, and having adjusted the skins, so as to cover the aperture, followed.

“This house is better than it looks,” said the goatherd, as he stepped from the ladder, and he desired Castagnello to follow. When they had traversed for some time a long dark gallery, Castagnello heard the sound of male and female voices, and was soon after ushered into an apartment, where several men and women were seated round a table. It was an excavation in the rock, and lighted by a window in the side of a precipice overlooking a deep and shaggy ravine.

The banditti, for such they were, seemed a little startled at the entrance of Castagnello, but the goatherd soon gave such a description of him as allayed their apprehensions.

With this association he continued some time; at first the energy of his character seemed to be essentially impaired, for, though he acquiesced in the proposals of the robbers to partake of their predatory adventures, he accompanied them to the field without spirit and regardless of the issue. Still, however, there was an air of ruined superiority about him, which obtained their respect, even while they were inclined to undervalue his courage, for they attributed the listlessness with which he embarked in what they considered their bravest enterprises, to a deficiency of that quality—a quality which the vulgar ever esteem as the best of manly virtues. But at length the feelings which produced this effect began to abate in their intensity, and that absent demeanour which his base associates ascribed to the softness of his character, gradually disappeared. On one or two occasions of danger his spirits had rallied with an alacrity that excited their astonishment, and his native heroism flashed out with a splendour that commanded their

rude applause ; but for some time nothing occurred beyond an occasional conflict with a troop of sturdy travellers who would not be robbed with impunity, and though wounds were given and received, the results, even when booty was obtained, merited in general no particular remembrance.

It happened, however, one evening while he was out with a small foraging party, that a detachment of the gang overtook a company of travellers on the great road to Rome, and in order to obtain a ransom, the plunder being inconsiderable, they made one of them a prisoner and carried him to their retreat. This incident, in itself trifling, was yet, as we shall have occasion in the sequel to relate, the key-stone of Castagnello's destiny, for in that traveller he recognised an old acquaintance, and the same night he contrived to escape with him, undiscovered from the cavern ; in a word, the prisoner was no other than Corneli, but from that night Castagnello himself was not heard of till after the Earthquake.

CHAPTER XI.

Alas !

How loath'd and irksome must my presence be.

JOANNA BAILLIE.

SUBSEQUENT to Corneli's escape with Castagnello from the robbers, his history is also involved in much obscurity. It would seem, however, that some years afterwards he had been in England, for one night Lady Wildwaste at the Opera observed a foreigner, seated among some of his own countrymen, eyeing her particularly from the pit. A gentleman, who was at that moment in conversation with her, remarking the same thing, enquired if she was acquainted with Count Corneli? The name recalled a number of painful reflections, and, after looking at the stranger steadily for some time, she said, "I did once know a Count Corneli at Florence, a Sicilian, and a per-

son of high connections, both in his own country and at Naples, but I do not think that foreigner is the same person. Is his name also Corneli?"

The gentleman happened to be intimately acquainted with the stranger, and told her that he was, indeed, the same Count Corneli, for he had spoken of having known her father at Florence, at the time her sister Lady Alicia died. Lady Wildwaste looked earnestly towards the Count, but his head was turned in another direction, and she could not see his face, but she perceived that he was looking towards her husband, who had at that moment entered the theatre.

Lord Wildwaste, in gazing round the house to see the company in the boxes, caught the eye of his lady, and she beckoned him to come up in such a manner that he immediately obeyed, but before he reached the box Corneli had disappeared. She related to him what had passed, adding, "I cannot think it is the same Corneli. He resembles him, it is true, in size, and

somewhat also in the general cast of his features, but he has a thoughtful melancholy expression in his look, so totally different from the libertine impudence of the Count, that I am persuaded he is a different person, though, perhaps, a relation."

"It will be a curious coincidence," replied the Earl, "if he should happen to be in London at this time, for, in passing along Piccadilly this morning, I saw a foreigner in a carriage, so very like the unfortunate Castagnello, that were I not assured he has been sentenced to hard labour for life, at Messina, I could pledge my honour it was him." His Lordship then turning to the gentleman who was acquainted with Corneli, gave him a short sketch of the Count's character, and also of Castagnello's adventures, suppressing the circumstance of their relationship, requesting him, at the same time, to take an opportunity of apprizing Corneli that his true character was known.

Mr. Mowbray, with whom this conversation took place, immediately quitted the box, and searched all over the house, but

the Count was gone. Next morning, however, he called at his lodgings, and, after some prelusive observations, he enquired of Corneli if he knew any thing of one Castagnello. The Count blushed deeply, and said, that "he had, indeed, heard something of such a person, who had been sentenced to hard labour at Florence, for striking Lord Kenelsmore, about the time when he became acquainted with his Lordship." The look with which Mowbray may be said to have commented on this, somewhat disconcerted Corneli, who, after a short pause, as if to recover his self-possession, continued: "Some time after, in the course of a journey from Florence to Rome, I fell into the hands of a band of robbers, who, at that time, greatly infested the papal territory, and was detained by them as a prisoner several weeks. When I recovered my liberty, instead of going forward to Rome, as I intended, I went to Leghorn; and while in that city, I was informed that the banditti, soon after I had effected my escape, were dispersed, and that among

those who were taken, the wretched Castagnello was found, he having joined himself to the band."

This account tallied in part with what Lord Wildwaste had told Mowbray, and seemed quite satisfactory; it also satisfied him that the Count was a bad character, and that confusion of face which he had manifested in speaking of Castagnello, was a proof of his guilt. Mowbray therefore resolved not only to end their acquaintance, but also to put his friends on their guard against the unprincipled foreigner. But this determination was not made without reluctance for his dispositions were manly and generous, and he had conceived something like esteem for Corneli, although their acquaintance was but of short standing.

The introduction of Mowbray to Corneli was, indeed, under circumstances, calculated to make a favourable impression. They had come over from Calais in the same packet, and among the passengers were several performers engaged at the Opera House. Corneli, on enquiring of

them for the sister of Castagnello, who had several years before been so celebrated at Paris, evinced so much sensibility at hearing of her death, that Mowbray at first suspected he had been one of her lovers, especially when the players introduced a little boy to him as her orphan. It turned out, however, that Corneli had never seen the lady, but that he had known her mother at Naples, and that the interest which he took in the child was owing to the kindness, as he said, with which her celebrated mother had treated himself when he was a little boy.

Having learnt from the players, that young Alphonso was wholly dependent on their bounty, the Count proposed to take him from them, and to educate him at his own expense, which he accordingly did on their arrival in London, and lodged with a banking house a sum of money sufficient to defray the expense of the child's education.

Out of this incident grew the acquaintance which Mowbray had formed with

Corneli, and it was therefore not surprising that he deemed the rupture of it a disagreeable duty to society. The pang of this, however, was soon appeased, for he heard, in the course of the next day, that Corneli had left London. Except this incident, and that the Count afterwards travelled over the greatest part of Europe, visiting every object of interest, and deporting himself with singular reserve, and even a sadness of manner towards strangers, little was known of him till his return to Messina, about a year, as we have mentioned, prior to the earthquake.

CHAPTER XII.



What can this mean!—he will not speak to me!—
But, oh! that wretch, who doth possess his ear—
Had I ten hundred hands I'd use them all,
To pluck the varlet from such proud preferment.

THE LADY'S DOUBT.

ABOUT three months after the occurrence which we have just described, a vessel arrived in the bay of Smyrna from Italy, and a traveller from Christendom was put immediately on shore. He had no letters of introduction to any of the Christian merchants in the factories of that city, but he went immediately to an English house, then celebrated throughout the Levant for its opulence and hospitality, and lodged a large sum of money in Venetian sequins, taking letters of credit on Constantinople

for the amount. While the clerks were counting the money, the Englishman scrutinized the stranger with a sharp and something of a suspicious eye. He had much of the air of a gentleman, his figure was strikingly handsome, and the outlines of his physiognomy were calculated to beget a prepossession in his favour, but there was an abstraction, a confusion, a consciousness of degradation in his look that rendered his whole appearance singularly mysterious. He spoke very little, but what he said was expressed in the choicest Italian. He represented himself as a native of Florence, but one of the young men engaged in counting the sequins being from Tuscany, thought by his accent, that this could not be true. The merchant, however, invited him to stay in his house while he remained in Smyrna; and at dinner it came out, in the course of conversation, that it was the stranger's intention to travel to some of the most remarkable scenes of ancient grandeur in Asia, a circumstance which induced the

Englishman to express his surprize that he should think of first going to Constantinople; and he advised him to avail himself of the opportunity of being at Smyrna, to visit the ruins of Ephesus, which are little more than a day's journey distant from that city.

There was some mental reason which rendered it evidently a matter of indifference to the stranger, in which way he first directed his course. He was either ignorant of the vicinity of Ephesus, or careless about the objects of his journey; but before he left the dinner table, it was agreed that he should set out on the following morning, to see the supposed remains of the temple of Diana, and the other fragments of magnificence which constitute the relics of that celebrated town. To facilitate this object, the merchant arranged with one of the Janizares, in the pay of the British consul, to provide the necessary horses, and to go with him as his guard and conductor: all this was done in the custo-

mary way that ordinary travellers undertake the journey, but in the evening the stranger said to the English host, that when he got to Ephesus, he might, perhaps, go further, and requested him to instruct the Janizary accordingly.

It happened that the Janizary was entirely a Turk, and could speak only the Ottoman Arabic, so that when the merchant explained to him the desultory intentions of the traveller, he begged that an interpreter might be hired to go with him. This was so rational a proposal that a Greek, of the name of Demetrio, who was in the practice of serving the British travellers in that capacity, was engaged by the stranger accordingly.

Demetrio, the Greek, was a short, squat, Sancho Panza personage, with vivid black eyes of a duck-like naivetté of expression. It could not be said that he was sensible of being a wit, but he could scarcely speak two sentences without saying something that possessed the best qualities of a bon-mot, namely, the power of producing

laughter. He was never intended by nature to possess a particle of cunning, but his Greek education, together with the corrupt influence of example in other servants, had rendered him singularly roguish in the gentle sense of the term. He was in his dealings constantly intending some sinister advantage to himself, and doubtless he was sometimes successful, but in general he took such odd and droll ways of attaining his ends, that it was impossible to be angry even at the most palpable instances of his petty dishonesty; and when he was detected, he looked so infantinely simple and surprised, that it was almost difficult to suppose that he had been attempting any knavery. Besides this curious felicity of manner, Demetrio had higher claims on the good humour of his master. Nature had endowed him with a whimsical method of cogitation, so like philosophising, that it was almost as amusing to hear his moral reflections as to catch him in the actual practice of that minor knavery, which

seemed to have so little in its composition of common guilt or sin.

As soon as Demetrio was hired, he began to tell his master that it would be necessary to lay in a stock of provisions for the journey, and that it would be wise not to be too stinted, even although the expence would be considerable in the first instance. "No one," said Demetrio, "who undertakes a journey can foretell what may happen before it is ended; it will therefore be a wise thing of you to provide a good stock of provender. If it turn out too much, there will be something left to serve in some other journey, and if we take longer time in this than you are now going than we at present expect, you will have got so many days of your life over without any more expence."

His master assented to the justness of the remark, and gave him money enough to provide much more than was sufficient; and Demetrio, according to his own account, made the disbursements with such

consummate wisdom, that the money performed more than it could possibly have been expected to do in the hands of any ordinary domestic; but he contrived, nevertheless, to save about twenty per cent. for his own particular use and benefit.

When the little requisite preparations were all in order, the travellers set out for Ephesus. Nothing particular occurred in the first two or three stages; the interpreter was garrulous and jocund, the Janizary preserved a solemn taciturnity, and the stranger an inflexible silence, approaching to sullenness. It was not however possible that he could long remain in this unsocial mood; for the air was pure and exhilarating, the fields were in their richest beauty, the birds sang their cheerfulest songs, and all nature was in a blithe and holiday spirit. But after they had gained the summit of the mountains above the town, the appearance of cultivation on both sides of the road gradually contracted, and at last entirely disappeared, and the path assumed the rude

outlines of a track across a vast and lonely expanse of pasturage.

They halted the first evening at a small khan, intending to remain there for the night, but after resting about two or three hours, the moon rose so bright and beautiful, that the stranger enquired if it was not possible still to reach Ephesus that night. The Janizary at first was reluctant, but in the end he consented, being informed by Demetrio that his master was a Magalos Anthropos, and both able and willing to give him a magnificent regalo, in addition to the stipulated price.

When they reached the miserable hamlet among the Ephesian ruins, the khan where the Janizary intended they should lodge, was filled with Turkish recruits, on their way to Constantinople, and he did not deem it safe to trust the Christian guest among them. For lightly as in other respects the Mahomedan may consider the Christian, the Janizary or Tartar, who undertakes to guide or guard the traveller, feels himself

under a religious obligation to protect him from insult and wrong. Another lodging it became necessary for them to procure, and an Athenian Greek, who kept a small huxtry, overhearing what passed among them on this subject, offered to accommodate them in his house.

The Janizary, glad of this arrangement, left them to join his fellow subjects and soldiers in the khan, while Demetrio set himself busily to work with tongue, hands, and feet to lay out a repast from the haversack of the good things which he had provided, at so great an expence, with so much prudence and economy. In the meantime his taciturn master had stretched himself out on a rude sofa, which occupied one part of the room, and their host, who was almost as much inclined to speak as Demetrio, seated himself on the floor near, and began to address himself with the most inflexible perseverance.

At first the stranger paid no attention to what he said ; after some time he appeared teased by the incessant talk of the Greek,

but in the end his attention was excited, and he evidently listened with interest.

The Italian of the Greek was not very pure; and ever and anon as Demetrio heard him make a bull or a blunder, he would suspend his hospitable cares, and hold his sides with laughing, mightily diverted that the poor devil, as he called him, should attempt to speak a language of which he was as incapable as an ass is to sound a trumpet. In the end, however, Demetrio had some reason to repent that he had not paid more attention to the sense than the phraseology of the Greek's conversation; for it turned out in the course of the evening, that his master had actually engaged him to go with them as his guide, and was quite indifferent whether poor Demetrio went or staid, or returned to Smyrna with the Janizary, whom his master had determined to discharge at Ephesus. What also surprised and disturbed Demetrio scarcely less than this unhappy discovery, was the respect with which his master treated Anastasius Papalazarus, their host, notwithstanding

his barbarous Italian and other offensive qualities, which could neither be described nor understood if Demetrio had made the attempt. The Magalos Anthropos, not only, to the violation of all decorum and propriety in a traveller travelling for pleasure, invited the accursed Greek to partake of his supper, but spoke to him of the ancients and other gods and idols, to the great scandal of his understanding. It being, as Demetrio thought to himself, a thing manifest to both eyes and ears, that an Athenian Greek was as ignorant as a kid, and knew as little about the ancients as a Turk, whom it is well known nature has made incapable of discerning the difference between a saint and an idol.

CHAPTER XIII.



So moves the world, each for himself intent,
To earn the means of his particular joy.—

ANASTASIUS PAPALAZARUS was, notwithstanding the invidia with which Demetrio regarded him, a very singular personage ;—nor was the matter of his discourse uninteresting. He had, according to his own account, travelled over a great part of Asia ; had visited many countries of Europe, and although the interpreter considered his language as so ludicrous, he had learnt it at Padua, where he studied medicine. The subject of his continual talk was the things he had seen, the places he had visited, to impress a splendid idea of his accomplishments and qualifications for a traveller's guide. 'The stranger,

undoubtedly, could not himself have been a person of any great erudition, when he supposed an Athenian, of the eighteenth century, a character meriting so much reverence on account of his knowledge, as to excite the envy of Demetrio, the interpreter, and yet he was no other than the same individual, Count Corneli, who at the time of the earthquake was considered one of the most learned, but at the same time the most mysterious personages in Messina. But not to digress too far from the immediate object in view, the result was, that the aforesaid Anastasius Papalazarus was engaged to accompany the Count as his guide, and that the unfortunate Demetrio and the Janizary received their discharge on the following day, and returned to Smyrna—while the Count, with his new interpreter, proceeded with horses hired at Ephesus to Scala Nova, a sea-port town a few miles distant, and which the Athenian described as one of the most beautiful towns in the world, to which all that could be seen at Ephesus was as nothing.

This was literally true; for the remains of that ancient city consist of such mere fragments, shapeless, broken, pulverised and dispersed, that it presented no object which the Count considered worthy of any attention. Demetrio had informed him of a gate-way and a church more beautiful, as he said, than gold, and that it was easier to look at the sun than to gaze upon them without admiration; but when the Count saw the one, he pronounced it despicable, and refused in consequence to go to see the other. In fact, the chagrin with which he found the real things fall so far short of the splendid descriptions of Demetrio, was one of the reasons, if not the chief, for his parting with that curiosity. In Anastasius, he had as he deemed, obtained his desideratum, a physician, a scholar, and a traveller united in the same person. Perhaps, however, had he reflected that so many rare qualities are seldom possessed by the keeper of a small huxtry shop, in an obscure village in any part of the world, he might have questioned the validity of

the Athenian's high pretension ; but this he did not do, and they proceeded together towards Scala Nova, he himself somewhat relaxed from his sullenness, and Anastasius in high glee, talkative and nonsensical.

Among other magnificent and beautiful objects which Anastasius promised he should behold at Scala Nova, was a lion of marble, so lively, that according to his account, you could not look at it without feeling at the heart an apprehension of being devoured. This lion stands near the entrance to the town, and the moment that the Count beheld it, he was visibly instructed that the Athenian was as little a judge of the fine arts as the discarded Demetrio, and that he was much more a knave. In a word, he found the town of Scala Nova, which he expected to see one of the most elegant in the world, a disorderly congregation of mean Turkish houses, and that the whole story of the studies and travels of Anastasius, the son of the priest, as his name implied, was a fiction ;—that erudite personage never having been further into Asia than

Ephesus, where he had resided only about a month.

The vexation of Corneli, on making this discovery, induced him to discharge the varlet, immediately after they had put up their horses at the khan, and to engage in his stead a Ragusan sailor, who had just arrived from Alexandria, and who happened to be among the crowd who came to look at him as he alighted.

This new interpreter, taken by chance and obtained by accident, proved a fortunate acquisition. He had really visited many parts of the Mediterranean, and could give a tolerably intelligent account of what he had seen; but he also was not to be trusted: for although he was free from personal vices, he had a strong implanted disposition to a roving and unsettled life, with an unextinguishable curiosity to see strange places; and to the gratification of this passion he made no scruple to make his master subservient.

Among other strange and wonderful places of which Antonio had heard, was

the city of Trebizond ; where it was situated or by what means it was to be reached, he knew not : but he burned with impatience to view this ancient capital, which had been described to him as more wonderful than any other city in existence. The only fact with which he was acquainted, tending in the smallest degree to guide him was, that the person who told him had come from Constantinople, and therefore he thought that by going first to that city, he might there learn something of the road to Trebizond. Fearful, however, that Corneli might not be inclined to go to Trebizond, he impressed upon him by all the arts of which he was master, that it was of no use to think of travelling in Turkey without a Firman, and that a Firman could only be obtained by going to Constantinople.

There was something reasonable in this proposal, and it fell in with the Count's original view of visiting the Ottoman capital. Accordingly it was soon determined that they should proceed to Constantinople, and the Ragusan the same afternoon ascertained

that there was a passage vessel in the harbour of Scala Nova, bound for that city, and which would sail in the evening. In this vessel they took their passage, and with a favourable wind were the next morning in the Straights of Scio.

The vessel had passengers both to land and to take on board at the city of Scio, and the Count, with Antonio, went on shore. The external beauty of this town, with its gardens of orange and mulberry trees, interspersed with pretty country houses, had somewhat appeased the disappointed spirit of the Count, but the ruinous and decayed appearance of the interior of the streets and houses roused all his bile, and made him much more fretful and impatient than ever.

Among the passengers who came on board at Scio, was a Roman Catholic priest, a friar of the capuchin order belonging to the College of the Propaganda of the faith at Rome. Padre Urbano was on his way to Constantinople, for the purpose of taking his passage there for any port in the Black

Sea, nearest to a monastery of his order, situated in a small town among the vallies of the frosty Caucasus. In mentioning this circumstance to the traveller, he happened to say that he supposed his best way would be to take the first vessel going to Trebizond, and to trust to finding some other at that port by which he would be taken nearer to his destination. Antonio, who overheard him, was delighted to have thus discovered that there was so little difficulty in reaching Trebizond, which his imagination had pictured as surpassing in magnificence all the other cities of the earth, and he in consequence endeavoured to inspire his master with a very mean opinion of Constantinople. He described it as dirty in the extreme, the streets narrow, the houses mean, the moschs huge and clumsy, and in fact much more like what it is than the descriptions in most books of travels; while at the same time he adroitly insinuated that he had heard much of the beauty of Trebizond, of the remains of grandeur around it being so numerous, that the walls might be said to be formed

of mutilated statues and ancient marbles of the rarest and richest kind.

Though his account of Trebizond made but a slight impression on the mind of his master, the description of Constantinople had quite an opposite effect. Every thing that he had seen in Turkey was decayed and in a slovenly state of dilapidation, and from what Antonio had told him of Constantinople, he was naturally prepared to see a more extensive congregation of squalor, poverty and ruin. The view, however, of the Ottoman metropolis from the sea is the most superb in the world, and our traveller saw it to the utmost possible advantage.

He had laid himself, wrapped up in his capot or great coat, down on the deck to sleep, a short time before the vessel came in sight of the city. It was then the evening, and he slept till day-break, at which time the vessel passed the seraglio point, and was steering into the harbour. It happened to be then the feast of the Ramazan, when the exterior of the moschs and minerets are

illuminated ; so that when he raised his head, he beheld from the vessel's deck, in the grey light of the morning, innumerable triumphal columns, as it seemed to him, gemmed with beautiful lamps, and palaces and temples of amazing magnitude, adorned with the most glorious ornaments of wealth and revelry. He could not for some time persuade himself that the gorgeous spectacle of that vast city, in all the radiance of her highest solemnity, was not a phantom of his own creation.

As the morning light grew more and more powerful, the illuminations faded, and the magnificent outlines of a grandeur which exceeded all his previous conceptions, were filled up with the mean objects which constitute the mass of Constantinople. But he had received such an impulse from the first view, that his mind still continued to vibrate with pleasure; and when he looked around on the forest of masts belonging to the vessels in the port, the apparently limitless extent of the city, the

rich views of the Asiatic banks of the Bosphorus, and the golden domes of the Sultan's palace rising amidst trees and gardens, he felt as if he had never before met with any thing that merited his admiration.

CHAPTER XIV.



I know that universal causes
In nature produce nothing ; but as meeting
Particular causes, to determine those
And specify their acts.

BEN JONSON.

WHEN the Count landed, he soon found that Antonio had not exaggerated the faults of Constantinople ; and Padre Urbano, who had scarcely been less astonished at the magnificence of the external view, in ascending the steep and dirty lanes of Galata, leading to Pera, where he intended to take up his abode, began to moralize on the deceitful appearance of all sub-lunary things. “ It is thus,” said the worthy Friar, “ with every thing in this world. We see before us the beautiful

creature man, adorned with the presence of a God, and the radiance of a divinity lighted up in his eyes; but as the time runs and knowledge of the mind is unfolded, we perceive the noble aspect of courage, and vigour, and generosity, which we once contemplated with so much pleasure, gradually shrivelled up into caution, and imbecility, and avarice; and when we look still more closely, we behold but the vileness of corruption, disease, and worms. All in this world, Count, is but a vain show—even to ourselves we are the greatest impostors respecting our own characters—believing that we are endowed with talents and possessed of virtues that deserve applause, when we are in reality but wretched combinations of vanity and ignorance.”

As the Friar was thus delivering himself of the chagrin which the disappointment he had met with occasioned, a large corpulent Turk, with a pipe in his mouth, happened to be coming out of a door, and the Friar unfortunately not thinking of the place and personages he had to deal with,

innocently raised his hand and turned the pipe aside, for which civility the indignant Mussulman spat in his face, and assailed him with every epithet of contempt and rage, till the terrified Monk almost fancied that he actually felt a sword in his stomach and a bow-string round his neck. However he was permitted to go on, and he remarked to Corneli, who was somewhat risibly excited by the accident, that the streets of Constantinople were not fit places for making moral reflections, and that the Turks were most deservedly accursed infidels, and well merited the doom that awaited them in another world.

As soon as our voyagers arrived at the Frank-tavern, in Pera, to which they had been conducted as the best place for his master to be well accommodated, and the Friar to find a conductor to one of the Roman Catholic Monasteries, Antonio, after taking some refreshment, was dispatched to enquire if there was any vessel in the harbour for Trebizond, the traveller having agreed to accompany the Friar to that wonderful

metropolis, for such he now deemed it must be, so much had Constantinople transcended his expectations. No other errand could have been half so agreeable to the Ragusan ; it was just what he wished for, and his search was executed with speedy feet. In the course of the forenoon he learnt that there were several vessels loading, a circumstance which confirmed them all in the greatness of their ideas of Trebizond, and he was again dispatched to engage a passage for them in one that was expected to sail in the course of a day or two.

Our traveller having with Padre Urbano visited all the principal objects of curiosity in the Ottoman capital, embarked for Trebizond, and was conducted by a brisk and steady westerly wind up the continual ebb of the Bosphorus, and fairly launched upon the bosom of the Black Sea. The Friar, who possessed a considerable tincture of classical and modern literature, described to him the principal events for which the navigation of the Bosphorus was celebrated. He pointed out to him where, ac-

according to history, the ancients had performed their heroic exploits, and showed him the spot where the Mahomedans first crossed into Europe, as he had in ascending the Hellespont, shown him where the Persians, in earlier times, had also led their oriental barbarians. He mentioned to him the voyage of Jason in quest of the golden fleece; and related the story of Medea, and the tremendous vengeance with which, in her jealousy, she punished herself as well as the perfidy of her lover.

Slight and imperfect as the Friar's brief sketches of these things were, they produced a lasting impression on the mind of the traveller, by being associated with visible objects, and the sight of the scenes where the transactions are supposed to have taken place. But that impression though it more richly served for conversational purposes than if the same information had been obtained by the study of the classic authors, from whom the Friar drew his learning, it was still of too vague a kind to enable the traveller to speak with the pre-

cision of a scholar, when he afterwards, at Messina, took occasion to describe his voyage to the Black Sea.

On the tenth day after their departure from Constantinople, the vessel reached Trebizond, and it is impossible to describe which was the most disappointed, master or servant, when the traveller and Antonio beheld the miserable remnants of that once flourishing emporium which formerly boasted of its emperors, and in opulence and commerce even rivalled Constantinople. Padre Urbano, although better informed, was, nevertheless, also exceedingly disappointed, and as much disposed to moralize on the deceitful appearance of sublunary things, as when he landed in the Ottoman metropolis. He soon, however, recovered his kief, as the Turks call a comfortable state, and when they had got their luggage on shore, and obtained a friendly reception from the monks of a monastery belonging to the Propaganda, he had no difficulty in persuading the traveller to accompany him to the ridges of Mount Caucasus, whither he was bound.

The traveller, indeed, seemed to possess a fine sense of the beauties of nature, and to derive more pleasure in contemplating the forms of grandeur and power which the varying phenomena of the sea and skies exhibited, than from the enjoyments of society. The Friar, in fact, was somewhat at a loss what to make of him. He was evidently disturbed by unhappy recollections, but they were not those gloomy and fierce feelings, the repercussions of a guilty conscience, but rather a sort of vague misanthropy, the offspring of satiety and blasted hopes. He seemed to live, merely because he was alive, and was so little under the influence of any decided motive, that his mind was as easily turned from one object to another, as the thistle's down in the breath of the summer's air, or the sea bird that sleeps upon the bosom of the ocean, and is borne away unconscious of the tides and currents that perplex the considerate mariner in his voyage.

Antonio would have been discharged at Trebizond, but his curiosity was as aimless

in its activity as his master's cogitations, and it was enough that an opportunity presented itself of seeing a strange country, to make him solicitous of permission to go. The traveller listlessly acquiesced in his request, and, after resting a day in that city to make some little requisite preparations, the party joined a caravan, which, in its way to Bagdat, was to pass through the town to which Padre Urbano was bound.

CHAPTER XV.



Ships of the desert ! Many a weary league
O'er burning sands, beneath a flaming sun
That ever cloudless fires the thirsty air,
Their toilsome course from Bussora was held.—
He view'd, contented, the slow-pac'd advance
Of their soft-footed camels, on whose backs
Of basket-leanness, gaily looking forth,
The young, the infant, and the lamb, were pil'd
In pannier and in cage ; and rattling rung
The cluster'd culinary ware, as down
The slope abrupt with surging steps they came.

THE CRUSADE.

WHETHER our traveller kept any journal of his observations, like the generality of Europeans that traverse the wilds and wastes of Asia, we have not been informed, and therefore our readers must not expect such a circumstantial account of what he saw and met with, as it might otherwise

have been in our power to supply. All that we know for a certainty is, that during the first two or three days, he was as much amused as a man in such an abstracted state of mind could well be, by the novelty of the incidents which happened either to himself or to others.

It was about day-break when the caravan got underway at Trebizond : it consisted of about three hundred camels laden with merchandise, culinary utensils, children, poultry, lambs, and all those other various stores, chattels and implements, which may be supposed requisite for a long voyage, and to a community who have no local habitation.

The Count was struck with the singular simplicity of the persons immediately belonging to the caravan; the drivers, their wives and families, contrasted with the cunning of the Jews and Armenians, who constituted the main body of the passengers. The expression of their physiognomy was open and artless, and their manners were soft, mild, and considerate. They were,

however, far from being of a cheerful disposition; on the contrary it might be said that they were remarkably thoughtful, but it was a habitual placidity of mind untinged with any melancholy—a sort of pensive innocence, incurious and docile, which received with patience and equanimity the good and ill of life. They had no homes, for the caravan was their city; and they seemed to have none of those remembrances and regrets which are only produced by the cultivation of the affections in a permanent domicile.

One day, however, as they passed over a spacious plain, bounded by mountains so distant, that they seemed only of a deeper amethyst than the blue of the sky, the caravan halted on the banks of a stream, and our traveller saw a father and mother, as he supposed them to be, take their two little children from the baskets in which they were carried on the back of a camel, and lead them to where a stone, with a turban rudely carved on it, showed that a Mahomedan was buried. He

watched their motions, and saw that the female, often pointing to the grave, seemed to be inculcating some important lesson. The children listened with attention to what she said ; but the eldest, at last, burst into tears, and she removed them from the spot. She was their mother, and it was their father's grave, by the way-side in the desert, that she was thus showing while she enumerated his virtues. The assistant was her second husband, and he stood respectfully at a distance while this little scene was performing, and evidently viewed it with sympathy and tenderness.

Nothing can be more monotonous, after the third day, than travelling with an Asiatic caravan, especially in those tracks of country where the attention is not excited by the apprehension of falling in with those roving hordes of barbarians who along the skirts of Arabia and the frontiers of Persia, render the voyage of the deserts so dangerous. On the ninth day after their departure from Trebizond, our travellers approached the mountains of Caucasus. For

the greatest part of the journey, the country had been open and arid, and they had passed through several towns that had but recently fallen into ruin. In one of some extent, and adorned with several moschs, they saw not a single inhabitant. Padre Urbano, and Antonio, the wandering Ragusan, were much alarmed at this circumstance, and began to apprehend that some wasteful pestilence had swept the whole country, and that as they advanced they should find the desolation more and more complete. But the traveller was rather pleased than dismayed, and he took a strange and wild delight in supposing that some new principle of destruction was let loose on the world, by which all living things would in a short time be annihilated. The Friar, to whom he expressed this gloomy conception, heard him with concern, and on questioning him respecting some points of religious belief, was grieved to find that he was almost entirely ignorant of religion.

To assist in teaching the Roman Catholic doctrines of Christianity, was the chief

object of the education which Padre Urbano had received, and with that delicacy and dexterity which the Missionaries of the Propaganda know so effectually to employ for the purpose of making converts, he addressed himself gradually to the traveller with more and more earnestness, until he had excited his attention to some of the leading points of his faith ; so that on the morning of the tenth day, when the caravan defiled into the valley that led to the little town of Abel-jazeer, where the monastery to which the Friar was bound is situated, he was a willing auditor to his lectures on the nature, objects, and excellence of the Christian religion. His attention, however, was not so entirely absorbed by the lessons of Padre Urbano, as to prevent him from noticing the altered aspect of the country. The swelling hills at the entrance of the valley as they advanced, rose steeper and loftier, and were clothed with the most beautiful verdure.—Towards the afternoon he observed that the naked granite here and there, pro-

truded from the brows of the hills, and by sun-set, when they reached the town, enormous rocks, stupendous mountains, cliffs fringed with woods, and falling waters were piled and mingled in the most majestic forms of nature's rudest magnificence.

The town of Abel-jazeer is situated on the banks of a brawling stream, at the foot of a precipice. It consists of about two hundred houses, pleasantly interspersed with trees and little gardens; and the inhabitants, who are remarkable for the fairness of their complexion, are celebrated for their hospitality in the songs of the camel drivers, as the beautiful melons of the hill. The monastery of the Propaganda stands above the town, on a projecting shelf of the cliff, and is only accessible by a slanting foot-path cut with great labour up the face of the rock, and fenced on the open side by a rude railing. From below, the buildings of the monastery seem to occupy the whole space of the ledge on which they are placed; for loftier and darker precipices rise immediately behind them. But on entering

the gate, the stranger is surprised to find himself admitted into a luxuriant garden, of two or three acres in extent, watered by a delicious rivulet that falls in picturesque cascades from amidst the trees and rocks of the precipice above. Doubtless this romantic situation was chosen as much for its security as beauty ; but it is nevertheless one of the finest in the world—the windows command a view of the sublime ridges and snowy tops of Caucasus. A lake, which receives the waters of the stream that flows past the town, is seen in the valley, studded with islands, on one of which stands a little village, amidst a few tufty trees, crowned with a white mosch and minaret. On the one side of this lake, a vast chain of mountains is discovered, extending so far into the east, that it may literally be said to reach beyond Aurora and the Ganges ; and on the other a champagne country spreads towards the south, over which the eye expatiates, till the plain, losing the character of land, melts in the distance, and assumes an airy indistinctness

of outline that mingles with the hazy horizon like the sea.

The Friars in the convent were not only rejoiced at the arrival of Urbano, whom they had long expected, but welcomed our adventurer with the utmost kindness. He was at first a little moved by their cordiality, but immediately after the compliments of reception, he seated himself at one of the windows of the parlour, and contemplated the sublime prospect which we have just described. Antonio, the Ragusan, in the meantime was eying every thing with a greedy curiosity. He was at first much delighted with what he saw, but in the course of half an hour he had seen every thing that the place afforded, and he became restless and uneasy. At last he ventured to disturb the reverie of his master by enquiring how long he thought it was likely he should remain in the monastery. "I cannot tell, perhaps for life," was the abrupt reply. "Very well, Signor," said Antonio. "I will go on with the caravan to Bagdat, which I am told is a wonderful fine place,

and perhaps when I return next year, I shall still find you here."

"Go where you please," replied his master. "I have no further use for you—bring me my portmanteau, and I will give you some money."

The portmanteau was brought, the money given, Antonio left the monastery, and descending to the town, joined the camel drivers, and took his departure with them soon after midnight.

CHAPTER XVI.



High Candahar, on eastern ramparts bold,
Imperial Gazni, seat of monarchs old,
Cower at the peal, astonished Cabal yields,
Lahoire recoils through all her floating fields.

C. GRANT.

THE Friars of the Propaganda monastery at Abel-jazeer, being selected for the dissemination of the faith, were men of talent, learning, and address. They had but few books in their library; they were, however, well chosen, and consisted chiefly of church history, and travels. In the former, our adventurer found a competent portion of secular concerns mixed up with ecclesiastical matters; and, in the latter, that agreeable union of enterprize, observation, and knowledge, which, to a new reader, is always the most agreeable kind of literature.

For some days after his arrival, he seem-

ed to be so much enchanted with the romantic situation of the place, that he spent the whole day in rambling over the picturesque environs ; but one morning, for which he had planned an excursion with Padre Urbano, to the top of the mountain on which the monastery stands, he was disappointed by a thick and drizzly mist which concealed every object, and wrapped the whole landscape from the eye, as it were, in a winding sheet. It was, therefore, useless to quit the house while this hoary obscurity remained, and the listless traveller had no other alternative, after conversing some time with the Friars, but to have recourse to the library. He was fortunate in the first book that he opened, the journal of a Jesuit in Asia Minor, written with the good sense, the intelligence, and the adroitness of mind which always distinguished the missionaries of that celebrated order. But we must not dwell on the particulars of his studies ; be it sufficient to say that the dark weather continued for several days, during which he contracted a taste for reading, and

having acquired some knowledge of different places and remarkable objects, he was enabled to lead the Friars to instruct him still farther, and, in the course of the three months which he staid among them, he had obtained a passable conversational outline of modern history, with a more full and accurate knowledge of modern nations. The Friars, for some time, were led to think, from the change which they perceived to be taking place in the habits of his mind, that he would probably join himself to their fraternity: but, when he had read all their books, and exhausted their stock of information, he again became restless and uneasy, and at length announced to them that he had formed the design of making an excursion along the foot of the neighbouring mountains towards the East, and to cross the ridge, if possible, to the Northern side of the chain, in order to see the country which lay beyond.

It was not his intention to bid them farewell, but their own good sense and experience taught them that they ought not to

expect his return. Desirous, however, that he should carry with him a pleasant recollection of their hospitality and friendship, they would not allow him to depart till they had procured for him all the information respecting the route he should take, that their limited means could obtain from among the inhabitants of Abel-jazeer. In this they were successful above all hope. A Tartar belonging to the Grand Vizier happened to be taken ill in his journey, and obliged to remain at the town, while his dispatches were sent forward to their destination by another courier. As he recovered, it occurred to the considerate Friars that, perhaps, he might be induced to act as a guard and conductor to their guest in his excursion, and when he was again well enough to take the road, they made an agreement with him to that effect. It was also arranged that, should the traveller be inclined to go to Constantinople, instead of returning to Abel-jazeer, the Tartar would attend him faithfully to the capital.

The requisite little preparations for the

excursion being made, our hero bade the worthy Friars adieu. He assured them that the time he had spent in their society had been one of the happiest passages in his life, and that if ever he should feel an inclination to retire from the world, he would come and take up his abode in their romantic habitation.

In the course of the first day's journey nothing interesting occurred: the traveller rode on absorbed in his own thoughts, reflecting on various topics, which all ended in depressing his spirits. The Tartar maintained an unvaried taciturnity. They passed between the border of the lake and the foot of the mountains, and rested for the night at a solitary khan, situated at a turn of the road which led across the ridge. The traveller had not expected to find the road turning off so soon, but he learnt that it lay along the face of the hills for many leagues, before it took a northerly direction.

On the following morning, before the dawn, they were again on horseback, and

reached the highest level of the road by sunrise. They then halted, and partook of a spare repast which the Friars had provided for them. The Tartar ate very little, but seated on the ground, struck a light in silence, and began to smoke. Having spent about an hour, they again mounted, and set forward at a brisk gallop, for the horses, in that part of the world, are not trained to trot. Towards noon, the road began to turn in among the swellings of the hills, and they had not proceeded many miles when they found themselves in a savage and narrow pass, a rift in the mountain, by some terrible convulsion of the globe, over which nature had showered, with a prodigal and fantastic hand, every variety of tree and shrub that darkens or decorates the glens and ravines of an Alpin region.

After travelling in this pass for some time, they came to another khan, situated near a small stream which was flung from the rock in a copious and glittering shower, and fell into a beautiful basin, on the banks of which a rude shed was tastefully con-

structed for the travellers to rest while their horses were baiting. Here, as the heat of the day was very oppressive, they again alighted, and the Tartar again spread before his charge, the contents of the haversack which the Friars had provided.

While they were engaged at this meal, a party of about a dozen Tartars came to the khan, and alighted. Our hero remarked that, after the interchange of a few words, his conductor looked at them with scorn, while, on their part, they regarded him with reverence and apprehension. They proved to be Hebrew pedlars who had assumed the warlike garb of the Tartars, that they might pass through the country with more consideration and security.

When the traveller understood this, he enquired if any of them could speak Italian, and one of them who possessed a slight smattering of the *lingua Franca*, presented himself. By him he was informed, that, after leaving the pass, the road ascended towards the highest ridges of the mountains, and passed under and along the edge

of tremendous precipices, over which, vast masses of the snow from the peaks and summits above, were often thrown down with dreadful violence, changing the course of streams, or damming them up so as to render them impassable. But, on the other side, there was a pleasant town where much profitable merchandise might be purchased, and that if the Signor wished an honest man to deal with, he could recommend one who had not his match for integrity in the whole world. The Signor, however, was not travelling for traffic, and the Jew was utterly at a loss to conceive for what other purpose a man would venture to encounter the dangers and difficulties of crossing the frosty Caucasus. His information, however, induced the traveller to determine on crossing the mountains, instead of remaining all night as he had intended at the khan. Upon mentioning this resolution to the Tartar, he perceived an emotion of surprize in his countenance, but no objection was made; on the contrary, the Tartar laid his hand on his bosom, and

intimated, by a mute inclination of the head, that it was his duty to attend him.

It was late in the afternoon when they resumed their journey. The day had been intensely hot, but the air was light, and occasionally the soft wing of a gentle breeze stirred the leaves and rustled among the woods that fringed and feathered the cliffs and precipices which overhung the solitary khan. Scarcely, however, had they advanced half a league, when the traveller became sensible of a sudden change in the state of the atmosphere. A sultry and stifling stillness rendered it heavy; its chrystaline purity became dull, and the sun declining towards the horizon, was oppressed as it were with a load of hazy obscurity that had not consistency enough to take the form of clouds.

This phenomenon for some time continued to increase, till the air was filled with a kind of palpable darkness, that can only be compared to a thin black mist. It covered the face of all things, and even seemed to change their forms. It magnified

the trees to a prodigious size, and gave them the appearance of towers and castles, while it rested on the mountain tops, and gradually concentrated into masses of black clouds, seemingly as solid as the hills themselves, but without any distinct outline.

The road which had never been regularly made, but consisted of several paths trodden out by travellers, as they came out of the pass and ascended the mountains, lay along an open waste or expanse of pasturage, somewhat resembling the downs of England, if any thing in the beautiful swelling bosom of the land of security, may be compared to the sublime solitudes of Asia.

The Tartar, who had been singing to himself for some time, at last paused and said seriously, that he was afraid the storm would be on before they could reach the khan. The traveller, however, merely motioned with his hand to make haste forward. Accustomed to implicit obedience, the Tartar touched his calpat and bosom, to

express his submission, and spurred his horse, but sang no more.

After riding about an hour, they reached the brow of the first swell of the mountains, which presented a track of about a mile in breadth, approximating in some degree to a plain. Along this to the steeper portion of the hills, the traveller galloped with a free rein; but occasionally his horse started and seemed alarmed and afraid to proceed.

About the middle of this moor, as we perhaps might be justified in calling it, although it was not covered with heath, the traveller met a party of Turks, anxious to reach the khan which they had left behind before the bursting of the storm, whose congregating terrors were momentarily growing more and more pregnant; but the 'Turks only looked at them as they passed. One, however, of a more compassionate nature, said in a single sentence—"You had better go back." The traveller was struck with their solemnity, and brief

as this admonition was, it seemed to him singularly impressive ; still, however, he went forward.

At the bottom of the steeper ridge of the mountains, which he had yet to ascend, he came to the ruins of a lone house, near to which a small cemetery, with a few turbaned tomb-stones, spread its melancholy surface by the side of the road. In this solitary place a group of four or five Ottoman shepherds had a corpse lying on the ground, while two of them were busy digging a grave to receive it. One of them was a little boy, and he wept bitterly.—“The will of God be done,” said the pious Mahomedans, as the traveller passed them, and his heart was smitten with an awful apprehension, the more terrible by its novelty ; but his courage was invincible, and he urged the Tartar to hasten on.

When they had nearly reached the summit of the second ridge, they came to a hollow in the rock, into which the Tartar immediately rode and dismounted. The traveller, surprised at this movement, also

halted, and demanded the reason. "I will go no further to-night," said the Tartar, and he seated himself on the ground under the rock, and prepared to light his pipe.

It was in vain to remonstrate with Suliman; but the traveller enquired, in an irritated manner, how far it was still to the khan.

Suliman, without changing his characteristic composure in any degree, informed him still half an hour's ride. The traveller told him it was absurd to think of passing the night in the cavern, with the menace of a storm over their heads, when they might so soon be in a better place;—but the Tartar only said that he would not pass the ridge of the mountains that night. "Then I will go myself," said the traveller. "The will of God be done," replied the Tartar, and our hero angrily spurred his horse and went on.

When he had ridden about two miles, he found himself suddenly involved in a portion of the clouds which were reeling along the higher regions of the mountains, and in the

course of a few minutes, in his eagerness to get forward, and to discover his way through the haze, he found that he had strayed from the beaten path. Still, however, he spurred his horse, in the expectation of reaching the top of the ridge before it was quite dark, but he spurred in vain. Instead of ascending, the horse kept along the face of the hill for several miles, and he had only light enough to discover that he was borne towards a deep and tremendous ravine.

To retrace his way was hopeless, and he halted and hesitated, when a vivid flash of lightning, followed by an instantaneous peal of thunder, at once startled the horse and his rider. He instantly alighted, the horse trembled with terror, and lightning and thunder, flash and peal in awful succession, rolled in redoubling wrath around them. A thousand echos repeated the clamour of the elements, and the traveller, for the first time in his life, felt the touch of superstitious dread, as he stood on the brink of the ravine holding his horse by the bridle.

The darkness was soon complete ; in every minute the lightning flashed, and the dreadful abysses of the ravine were lighted up. The traveller saw that the mountain over against him rose to a far greater height than the ridge on which he was standing ; and while he was endeavouring to trace its form to the summit by the flashes of the lightning, his horse uttered a wild and piercing cry, and almost in the same instant was struck dead at his side.

He had just a moment before parted his hand from the bridle, and he felicitated himself that he had done so, as he might otherwise have also fallen a victim to the electric element ; in such circumstances, so constituted is the human heart, that it will deduce matter for satisfaction. The traveller, however, had not long the pleasure of this feeling. In the course of a few minutes after, he heard a strange and singular sound or noise from the mountain on the other side of the ravine, followed by continued shrieks of horror, so strange and terrible, that they seemed like nothing of

this world ; soon after he heard a dreadful groaning, as it were of something in agony, immeasurably greater than any being of the earth, and in a few seconds after a shock as it were of an earthquake. In that instant the lightning flashed, and he saw as if the opposite mountain were coming towards him.

An evalanch had parted from its summit, and was gathering fury in its descent : ten thousand birds of the cliffs, wakened by the concussion, came screaming and fluttering around him, as the enormous mass, crushing, and rolling, and groaning, came more and more inevitably towards the ravine. When it reached the brink of the steep precipice, the traveller, although more than a mile distant, was so terrified, that he ran backwards. In a moment after he was overwhelmed in a shower of snow-dust, and instantly a noise, like the breaking in of the pillars of the earth, rose from the valley—the mountains rocked to their foundations—and an awful pause ensued. The storm which still raged, was but

as the last skirmishes that are heard on the skirts of the field where a battle has been fought that decided the fate of kingdoms. The evalanch had settled in the valley.

CHAPTER XVII.



Throw physic to the dogs, I'll none o't.

MACBETH.

IN the morning when our traveller looked around, instead of the sublime mountain landscape, the traces of the storm, and the track of the evalanch, he beheld the simple furniture of a cottage, and the Tartar sitting opposite to him smoking with his wonted composure. In the chimney a cheerful fire crackled under a pot, and a bright pencil of sunshine darting through a hole in an oil-papered window, fell on a large grey cat that was nursing three kittens on the hearth, comfortably enjoying the united influences of Phœbus and Pluto. On a shelf over the window stood several melons, two or three

gourds, a flask, a pitcher of an etruscan form, covered with a china saucer, three gallipots, a bundle of paper parcels, and a pestle and mortar; and from two cords that crossed the apartment diagonally, hung several large bunches of raisins, dried herbs, and a number of onions tied two and two together, illustrative of the doctrine of social connection, even in a state of dependence from a cord, in the condition of an onion.

When he had looked at the various domestic details of science and housewifery, which this scene presented, he began to entertain some doubts of his own personal identity, to satisfy which he addressed himself to Suliman the Tartar, having, during the time of his residence in the Monastery of Abel-jazeer, learnt a few phrases of Ottoman Arabic from the Friars and their visitors, by which he was enabled to hold as much conversation with that grave and sage personage, as Suliman himself was inclined to hold with any mortal man.

The Tartar informed him that he was glad to see his eyes open again, and that the sight of them were to himself as the joy of the morning.

“But how are we in this place?” enquired the traveller. “I was terrified by the earthquake,” replied Suliman, in a voice of awe and solemnity.

“By what means were we again brought together,” asked the Christian, somewhat impatiently.

The Turk drew two long whiffs of his pipe before committing himself with an answer to so difficult a question, and then said, with great humility, “By the will of God.”

At this crisis of their discourse, the door of the cottage was opened, and an apparition, like the rags and remnants of an ancient Roman Emperor clothed in purple, entered. This was no other than the famous Doctor Rubardo, a native of Corfu, who had wandered in quest of patients from Padua to the ridges of Caucasus. He

was then chief physician in the village of Hagi-Khanboul, and it was in his cottage that the Beysadis, as our traveller was called by Suliman, recovered the exercise of his faculties.

The Doctor, on looking at the Beysadis, expressed the greatest satisfaction at seeing him so lively ; and when the patient spoke, instead of attending to what he said, he continued his reflections in Italian, saying that no token of recovery, after a suspension of the functions of life, was so infallible as an intelligent eye, and the exercise of the faculties of speech.

“ It has pleased Heaven,” said the Doctor, “ to give man two eyes and two ears, and but one tongue, in order that he may observe more than he says ; and therefore when I find a patient of mine in a condition to use his eyes and tongue to good purpose, I do not despair of effecting a cure.”

As the traveller did not very clearly comprehend in what way the Doctor's inference was deducible from the premises, he interrupted him to resume the interrogatories,

which had been so conclusively answered by the 'Tartar.

“Softly, softly,” said Doctor Rubardo, fanning gently with his hand. “Before I can permit you to waste your renewed excitability by any mental effort, you must take this cordial;” and in saying these words he put his hand into his bosom and took out a phial.

“But I have no need of physic,” exclaimed the traveller. “Impossible,” replied the doctor, “I know better: nature, to be sure, has done much for you, but nature cannot do all, art must serve nature; she is her handmaid, and therefore take this draught and compose yourself.”

“I detest drugs,” cried the traveller, “and I will not taste your trash!”

The doctor looked with surprize for a moment, and shrugging up his shoulders, he touched his forehead at the same time with his finger, and turned round with a significant glance to the Tartar. Suliman drew his pipe from his mouth, and, puffing out the smoke which he had inhaled, gradually

assumed a look of astonishment, tinged with alarm.

“ I told you,” said the doctor to the Tartar, in Arabic, “ that none of his bones were broken, but all is not right with his head. Let us examine it.”

Suliman laid down his pipe, and rising from the floor where he was sitting cross-legged, gave himself a sort of rousing shake, and came to the doctor's assistance. The patient looked on, wondering what all this could portend, and when the Tartar came slowly behind, and seized him firmly by the arms, he could only express his amazement by looking at the doctor, who had, in the meantime, put on a pair of old nose-pinching spectacles which had lost one of the glasses, and was stooping forward to examine his head.

“ I do assure you,” said the traveller seriously, “ that except a sensation of fatigue, I feel myself perfectly well, and if you would have the goodness to procure me something to eat, I would soon convince you of the fact.”

The doctor started up with the expanded arms of admiration, and stepping back at the same moment, happened to tread on the cat and her kittens, and was instantly grasped by the fiercest claws in the leg. The Tartar quitted his hold, and the patient started from his recumbent position on the rude low sofa which served for his couch. Before the fangs of the accursed cat were extricated from the doctor's flesh, Suliman had resumed his cross-legged posture on the floor, and was knapping out the tobacco ashes from the bowl of his pipe to fill it again.

After some interchange of questions, the traveller learnt, that the Tartar whom he had left sitting in the cavern, became so alarmed as the storm increased, that when he heard the fall of the evalanch, he thought it was an earthquake, and rushing out upon the open heath, lost his way in the darkness. Towards morning the tempest abated, and, in seeking for the cavern where he had left his own horse, as the day dawned he found the body of our traveller's, and not

far from the spot the traveller himself in a state of stupor ; whether produced from any electric accident, or sleep, or the benumbing coldness of the mountain air, the ground being strewed with the snow dust of the evalanch, was never ascertained. The faithful Tartar, however, having soon after recovered his horse, rode back to the spot, and, lifting up the torpid traveller, carried him like a sack before his saddle, to the village of Haji-Khanboul, and brought him to the house of Doctor Rubardo.

Surgeons, in their department, having objects tangible to the senses before them, are obliged to reason rationally, and to think practically ; but physicians guess and grope so much, that their minds become at last, as hazy and maudlin, as those old beldams who have indulged too freely in stomatic cordials. The consequence is, that if they have any turn for humour, they are, in the decline of life, either garrulous like naturals, or marvelously sarcastic and cunning. Sometimes, when their grave and decorous affectation of

wisdom has grown to habitude, they dress primly, carry themselves erectly, speak little, but what they do say is always surprisingly emphatic, and far from the purpose. Doctor Rubardo, was, however, an exception to the general rule, and when we mentioned that he had wandered from Padua to the confines of Armenia, in search of patients, our readers must have been certain that he had none of the sordid cunning of his brethren. In fact, this distinguished individual, was, from his youth, an enthusiast, and enthusiasm acting on the loosely constructed understanding of a physician, was not calculated to produce a character very well fitted to acquire honour or fortune in Christendom, nor in any other part of the world. The object of the Doctor's enthusiasm was happiness, and it was less with the hope of making a fortune than to find the true elixir of life, that he had strayed so far from home. After a vain attempt with alembics and gallipots at Zante, he had passed over to Corinth, where he staid several months in

spleen and misery. He then went to Athens, and found that happiness must be in some other place; he visited almost every isle of the Archipelago, traversed the whole extent of Asia Minor, and was on his way to Russia, by the road to Astrahan, over Mount Caucasus, when he was taken ill of a fever at Hagikhanboul. While he lay there at the point of death, an angel, in the shape of a beautiful young woman, came to his couch, restored him more effectually than medicine to health, gave him her hand in marriage, and in due time presented him with a sucking cherub for a child.

“You shall see the divine creatures!” exclaimed the doctor, as he concluded his narrative, “You shall partake our bliss—you shall be as welcome into our paradise as a sinner to the devil’s feasts; we are not rich in silver and gold, but we have unexplored mines of felicity.”

“You are, indeed, a fortunate man,” said the traveller, somewhat more jocularly than appeared to be in his nature, from the

time of his arrival at Smyrna. “Ah!” replied the doctor with a sigh, “but the cup of pleasure is not always filled with honey: my wife is troubled with flatulence, the child piddles the bed, and I am convinced that happiness is no where to be found in this world.”

CHAPTER XVIII.



The grandam by the fire sat,
Hey, ho, hie,
And ever as she stirr'd the pot,
She sung her lullabie.

OLD BALLAD.

THE village of Hagikhanboul consisted chiefly of Armenian Christians, but the house of Doctor Rubardo was constructed according to the precautions of Mahomedan jealousy, having originally belonged to a Turkish officer. The room in which our hero awoke from his torpid trance, was appropriated to the use of males of the masculine gender, as an old friend of ours facetiously denominated the complete gentlemen of the Sultan's household; the haram, or feminine and negative apartment, was occupied by the Padrona, as the Doctor called his lady, with the sucking cherub;

and the wonted other etceteras of a nursing mother's suite. This was the elysium, the paradise into which the celestial Doctor intended to introduce his patient-guest. Accordingly, after some more conversation than we find it at all requisite to describe, the traveller was conducted thither.

On entering the room, he found it furnished in a much better style than the outer chamber, but it was littered with scattered garments: the most important utensil of the nursery occupied a conspicuous place in the middle of the floor. Two sides were occupied with those low, broad sofas that serve the inhabitants of the east for stool, chair, and couch. At the upper end a large fireplace, ornamented with rude carving and gilding, was well filled with blazing sticks, at which an old withered woman, the mother of the Padrona, was cooking some nursery viand in an earthen vessel. The heat obliged her to avert her face from the fire, so that while she stirred the pot with her right hand, she held up her left spread with the palm towards the flame, to screen her complexion.

On the sofa on the right of the fire place, nearly opposite the old lady, sat the Padrona herself. She had just lulled the child to sleep, and was bending over it in maternal solicitude, with her bosom bared on the one side nearly to the waist, and the breast was exposed to view, from which the little urchin had just unclosed his gums.

A nursery scene was, in some degree, new to our traveller, for he had long forgotten what it had been to his own infancy, and this was one not calculated to inspire him with much admiration for Doctor Rubardo's matrimonial paradise. He could not, however, but observe with surprise, the beauty of the Padrona; and the tenderness with which she looked at her infant, while she motioned to her husband to step softly, excited a respectful feeling towards her, far different from that which her fine person and dishevelled negligence was, in other days, and other circumstances, calculated to awaken. As soon as she saw him, the natural delicacy of the sex made her

cover her bosom, and she signified her welcome by a motion of the head and hand so exceedingly graceful, that he could not persuade himself she was only the daughter of a Georgian peasant, whom her mother had brought to Hagikhanboul for sale, where, by not finding a ready purchaser, the old woman was induced, with her assistance, to undertake the charge of nursing Doctor Rubardo in his fever. The beauty of the child beside her merited the encomiums of his father; he was a fine boy, about ten months old, and was lying as naked as a cherub with its cheek resting on one of its little hands, while the other hanging over its breast, still held a pheasant's feather with which he had been playing.

The Padrona addressed a few words in the Armenian language to her husband. "My wife thinks we shall disturb the child," said the Doctor, "and begs me to take you away, but when he awakes she will let us know; and she expects you will return and taste her roses and sherbet." The traveller immediately got up from the sofa

where the Doctor had seated him, and the Padrona, with a look of easy elegance that well accorded with the oriental treat of roses and sherbet, signified the expectation of which her husband had been the interpreter.

This is all very wonderful, thought the traveller to himself. "Here, in this unknown nook of the earth, is a lady of Nature's own forming, so lovely, chaste, and maternal, that she has, in two minutes, made me feel more respect for the female character than I ever experienced before;" and he felt as if he was from that moment something of a better man.

The Doctor having shown him the way back to the room where he had first been, suddenly darted towards the fire, and lifted off the pot which was on the point of boiling over. "I have prepared for you some delicious chicken broth," said the physician, "which I had almost forgotten, and as you were complaining of an appetite, you shall have it immediately." In the same moment, he tucked his ragged purple

silk pelisse up behind, and reaching, with the help of a jump, to the shelf above the window, took down one of the paper parcels containing cinnamon, and pulling out a bit, flung it into the pot, and replaced it on the fire. He then brought out a short three-legged stool, and placed on it a large tin tray about two feet in diameter. From a small cupboard behind the sofa he took out two earthenware plates, three wooden spoons, a tin fork that had once possessed three prongs, but only one and a half, with a stump of the third remained, and these, with a little salt in the lid of an old snuff box, and a knife formed of part of the blade and hilt of a sword, and three slices of brown bread, formed the furniture of the table.

The Tartar, who, during the visit to the Haram, had gone out, returned at this time, and seeing what was going forward, placed himself on the ground beside the table, while the hospitable host, who was not only cook but waiter, flung a towel over his arm, and going to the door, brought in a

pitcher of water and a basin, for the purpose of performing that delightful lavation of the hands before meat, which is one of those luxuries of the East that the more intellectualized inhabitants of the West have not yet adopted.

The Doctor then lifted the pot off the fire, and pouring the soup into one of the plates, afterwards tumbled the mangled members of the fowl into the other, but, unfortunately, so heedlessly that as they fell out some of the soup, which still remained with them, splashed up and scalded the Tartar's cheek, who only, however, gave a growl of anguish and wiped it off. The Doctor then seated himself, and the triumvirate began to eat, jointly and severally dipping their spoons into the soup-plate together,—Doctor Rubardo occasionally blowing to cool the broth, and descanting on the delicious flavour which he had given it by the happy thought of putting in the piece of cinnamon.

When they had finished this part of the

feast, the landlord lifted the breast of the fowl with the fork, and presented it to his guest; the Tartar stretched forth his hand at the same time and took hold of a leg, the Doctor himself immediately followed his example and seized the other. But we must not dwell too circumstantially on the details of this banquet. Let it be sufficient that if the soup was savoury, the chicken was tender, and that the party did all manner of justice to both. At the conclusion, the Doctor brought down one of the melons from the shelf, and a bunch of raisins from the cord, and the pitcher supplying some of that temperate wine which was made before grapes grew, our traveller finished a repast that he thought the most delicious he had ever tasted, for it was seasoned with the precious ingredient of an appeased mind, without which all the spices of Ceylon and the sauces of France, are as gall and wormwood. It seemed, indeed, to this mysterious and solitary traveller, that the luxurious dishes of the tables which he had

formerly frequented, must have been filled with a most unwholesome stuff, for they had always infected his brain with impetuous desires, which uniformly left behind a nauseous bitter, and life-loathing spleen.

CHAPTER XIX.



Her eye's dark charm 'twere vain to tell,
But gaze on that of the Gazelle,
It will assist thy fancy well.
As large as languishingly dark,
But soul beam'd forth in every spark
That darted from beneath its lid,
Bright as the gem of Giamschid.

LORD BYRON.

HAVING dispatched their meal, the doctor invited the Count to take a walk, and the moment he passed the door, he inhaled, as it were, a new spirit. The door opened to a rude terrace on the corner of a precipice, which commanded a view of the whole town, consisting of about two hundred and fifty houses, in what may be called bunches of villagery,—cottages, corn stacks, and trees, gathered together by hedges of rose trees in full blossom, placed here and there on rocks and cliffs at the head of a spacious valley, through which a clear broad stream

ran winding in the sun, till its course could be no longer traced among the green and wooded hills, which stretched down like so many successive tiers of buttresses to the dark grey and awful mountains that rose on each side in ridges of rocks and pyramids and pinnacles of snow, far above the clouds and wandering mist that made them often appear like islands of the sky.

The stream descended from a narrow wooded glen behind the town, and turned several mills before it reached the bottom of the valley. These were all cheerily going, and their wheels glittering and chattering seemed to give an air of peculiar life and industry to the scene, while along the banks of the quieter current below in print fields and bleaching grounds, numerous groups of old and young were busily spreading and watering. Occasionally the lilt of a song, or the cadence of a jocund banter, mingled with the singing of birds, the chirp of insects, the rustle of the leaves, and the numerous little rills and springs among the rocks which ran struggling and prattling

through the bushes, like nesting schoolboys on a holiday, formed a concert the most musical the traveller thought he had ever heard. His heart was gladdened as he looked around, and he felt as if some gross and clammy vestment had dropped from around him, and that he was released from the influence of some bewildering spell.

While he was enjoying the freshness of these new feelings, Suliman, who had moved towards the steps which led from the terrace to the high road that passed through the town, exclaimed, "Mashallah!" and, with as much alacrity as his cumbersome garb would permit, he hastened down the steps. The tone of surprize and pleasure with which Suliman had uttered this interjection of the faithful, attracted the attention of the traveller, who went immediately to see what could have produced an effect so extraordinary in a being so little liable to any kind of emotion; and he beheld, with still more surprize, this grave and trusty guardian with the lumbering playfulness of an affectionate mastiff, em-

bracing an old woman, evidently, by her dress, belonging to the shepherd's class, while a boy and a beautiful girl in the first bloom of womanhood, stood looking on in silent wonder.

When the mutual joy of an unexpected meeting had subsided, Suliman spoke a few words to the boy and girl, and they began to weep bitterly; the old woman also, after the interchange of a few sentences, mingled her tears, and even the face of Suliman himself appeared overcast with the shadow of sorrow.

The Doctor, who had witnessed this scene from the terrace, and who understood their language, told the traveller that, from what he could learn, it was the mother of Suliman, with two of her grandchildren, whom she was taking to a neighbouring town for sale, expecting, on account of their extraordinary beauty, to obtain a better price for them in a public market, than by dealing with the travelling slave merchants. "The lambs," said Doctor Rubardo compassionately, "are bleating for their mother; she

seems to have been the sister of Suliman, and to have only recently died, but their father went to the Persian war three years ago, and has never returned."

Suliman accompanied his relations to a small coffee-house at the bottom of the hill on which the Doctor's house stood, where he treated them with coffee, and where, in the course of a few minutes, they appeared recover from their agitation. Our traveller, led by an unaccountable sympathy, followed them with the Doctor, who took his place in the room near enough to overhear what passed. The traveller had been so much struck with the short explanation which the Doctor had already given of their condition, that he could not refrain from observing them narrowly.

The old woman, unlike the generality of Mahomedan females in the great towns and their populous environs, wore no veil. Her features, though sharpened by age, were regular and of a pleasant expression, touched with, what a European would say, something better and more genteel than

properly belonged to the lot of a peasant: The boy was about twelve years old, and for his years was tall and formed in the finest mould of youthful symmetry: his complexion was fair and florid, his eye dark and brilliant, and a smile, lighted up from within by the emanations of a cheerful spirit, rendered his appearance singularly interesting. But his beauty was as a shadow to the loveliness of his sister. Her appearance, to the European sight of the traveller, was about eighteen; she was, however, considerably younger: her figure was light and elegant, and her motions had an indescribable natural gracefulness, and innocence, which, independent of her affecting situation, rendered her one of the most beautiful creatures he had ever seen. Her arms and neck were of that exquisite delicacy which is always associated with ideas of high rank, refinement, and cultivation, and there was a playful pensiveness, if the expression may be used, an artless simplicity of look, that was far more beautiful than even the admirable

beauty of the face and full dark eyes, that gave it a corporeal and individual form and character.

The traveller could not persuade himself that these elegant and lovely creatures were the offspring of peasants, and expressed his doubts to the Doctor. "Peacocks, peacocks," replied the Doctor, "are not, to be sure, quite so common as barn door fowls and puddling ducks, but still they are all Nature's work."

We are a little diffident to mention what next passed in the traveller's mind, but it must come out. He thought if he could purchase these beautiful orphans, that, perhaps, he would do a benevolent action; at least, he was convinced that he would add to his own happiness. He was not, however certain what he should do with the brother of Zeryda, but he thought that, perhaps, with her, like the Doctor with his Padrona, he might approximate nearer to the acquisition of happiness in the town of Hagikhanboul, than in any other place, either in Christendom or Turkey, that he

had yet visited. After a few minutes cogitation, he therefore desired the Doctor to ask their price, which was so far below what he expected, that he resolved to close the bargain, but, upon reflection, he had not money enough, and what could be done with a letter of credit in the regions of Mount Caucasus? This obstacle, however, the Doctor soon obviated. In a word, a bargain was struck, and the Beysadis, as Suliman called him, became the purchaser of the brother and sister. The old woman was glad to have met with so ready a merchant, and the slaves acquiesced in their destiny as a matter of course, to which their minds had been long prepared.

As soon as the earnest money was delivered, the Doctor suggested that it would be necessary to provide a house, and proposed that the traveller should hire one situated on the same cliff with his own. This was also agreed to, and the frugal furniture for an Armenian cottage was speedily procured, so that in the course of little more than three hours from the time that

he recovered from the trance, in which he had been carried to the house of Doctor Rubardo, our adventurer had formed a full domestic establishment at Hagikhanboul. The Doctor, who was a delighted and bustling agent in the whole business, invited the strangers to his house; the women were admitted to the Padrona, in the haram, to rest themselves after their journey, while the men with Belik, as the boy was called, seated themselves in the outer apartment.

An adventure, altogether so strange, deeply interested the traveller, and he could not refrain from expressing to the Doctor his surprize at the incidents, and his curiosity to know something of Suliman, the Tartar, who, as soon as the bargain was concluded, relapsed into his wonted taciturnity, and, except in a sort of gruff kindness towards his mother, never seemed to take further care or interest in the parties; for, understanding that it was the design of the Beysadis to remain at Hagikhanboul, he intimated his intention of setting forward to his destination alone, as

soon as he had received the wonted present, and a certificate that so far he had conducted himself with fidelity and attention to his charge.

CHAPTER XX.



Ah, me! for aught that ever I could learn,
Could ever read in tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth.

SHAKSPEARE.

SULIMAN was the son of an Armenian peasant. His ancestors, according to the traditions of the country, had long been famed for the beauty of their persons; many sons of their blood had risen, from the condition of slaves, to the rank of Beys among the Mamelukes of Egypt and the Pachaws of Constantinople, while their daughters in the seraglios of the Selims and Amuraths were celebrated as the fairest of the Sultanas. Suliman, however, was rather an exception to the general elegance of his race, but he was stoutly formed, and capable of enduring almost incredible fatigue as a courier. He had been sold by his father

to a common slave dealer when he was about ten years old, and was carried by his master to the market of Constantinople, where he was again sold to an officer belonging to the Grand Vizier, in whose service he still continued, and was so much respected for his probity, that the Vizier had given him one of his slaves for a wife, so beautiful, according to the account which Suliman himself gave of her to his mother, that her eyes were as the gems of the rings on the Vizier's fingers, and her skin as fair as the snow on the mountains of Brusa. This nearly comprehends the whole biography of Suliman. He had performed, it is true, many journies, even to Bagdat, Damascus, and Cairo; he had also been at Buccharest, Belgrade, and as far into Christendom as Orsova, but he had rode so fast, and was so anxious to get to the end of his journey, that he had no time to pick up ideas, and his mind retained as much of the countries through which he had passed, as the air did of the form of his person, or the sea of

the vessel that leaves no trace behind. But, nevertheless, he was an affectionate and kind-hearted creature, and when he heard of the death of his sister, the mother of the beautiful slaves, he grieved for her loss as the playmate of his childhood, as if they had but just parted, although he had neither seen nor heard of her for more than twenty years. It remains for naturalists to account for his instinctive recognition of his mother, changed as she was by the lapse of time, and also for that vivid sensibility with which he recollected his favourite sister.

When he had received his present, and the certificate of his fidelity, he rose, and, without saying a word or taking leave, went to the post house in the town, and choosing the best horse in the stable, was at the next post house, and mounted on another, before his mother had any idea that he was gone.

In the meantime, the ladies in the haram were busy with their own peculiar affairs.

The Padrona and her mother discovered in the strangers, neighbours and relations, and much joy and talk were interchanged on the occasion. The attention of the fair and young Zeryda was soon engaged with the Doctor's cherub, and in tickling and playing with the child, she lost all recollection of having been only about an hour before sold into slavery. The Padrona, who was preparing for a visit from the traveller, had brought out some of her gayest garments, made of satin, and embroidered with gold, the costly and gorgeous produce of the looms of Scio, which the grandmother of the slaves contemplated with all those interjections of admiration and delight peculiar to the gentle sex, especially elderly ladies, if dowagers, at such interesting exhibitions, while the mother of the Padrona was not less feelingly employed in setting out their best china cups for coffee, and in preparing the sherbet and roses.

In due time, all was arranged for the visit: the four ladies were set out in state,

cross-legged on the sofas. The child was adorned for the occasion, and the signal for the gentlemen to enter was given by the Padrona clapping her hands thrice. The Doctor heard and knew the sound, and immediately got up from the seat where he was sitting, talking nonsense to the traveller, like the generality of the faculty, when they have nothing to say, and with great solemnity marshalled the way to the ladies' apartment. Belik, the boy, had discernment enough to perceive the ludicrous pomp of the Doctor's manner, and followed laughing as light-heartedly as a school boy in the enjoyment of a prank: but his master was grave and thoughtful, thinking about birds quitting, without regret, the maternal nest, and lambs, and whelps, and kittens, caring nothing at all about their affectionate parents, whenever they cease to give them suck, even before they come to days of discretion.

The visit was conducted with all appropriate solemnity. The Padrona, in her

gala dress, looked a very sultana, and the traveller was as at first much struck with the elegance of her deportment; but his attention was soon entirely rivetted on the fascinating form of his own slave, towards whom the child was creeping to play, having escaped from his mother when the visitors entered. The grand-mother of Zeryda, although but a rustic dame, sat in a very lady-like posture, at a little distance from the Padrona. Belik placed himself by her side, and began to describe to her in a whisper, the affected pomposity with which the Doctor had conducted them in; which the Doctor overhearing, gathered his brows into a frown, and shook his head with good humoured displeasure.

The mother of the Padrona now handed round the coffee. This was followed, after a short interval, with a pot of conserve of roses, of which each of the company tasted with the same tea spoon, the Doctor declaring it was delicious and most salutary. A tin bowl of sherbet was afterwards handed round, and, except a few good things

which Doctor Rubardo himself said, no conversation took place, and the gentlemen returned to their own apartment to partake of a more substantial repast, which had been cooked for them in the haram prior to the visit.

But still the mind of the traveller was perplexed; the beauty of Zeryda, her innocence, her helplessness, and her seeming confidence, interested all the best feelings of his bosom, and yet he could not disguise from himself that he had acted rashly in the purchase. His reflections, however, were soon disturbed by the Doctor, who ordered Belik to wait on them during their repast, which the boy did as an accustomed duty, and so well and cleverly, that he received great praise from the Doctor, who assured his master he had got an excellent bargain of him, and Belik was no less contented in his new office.

After dinner, the Doctor proposed that they should adjourn to the cottage, which had been procured for the domicile of the traveller, and in the way thither he began

to expatiate on the sweets of matrimony, and to give hints that it would be more creditable to his guest, considering that all the inhabitants of Hagikhanboul were Christians, although Armenians, if he would at once marry Zeryda, than keep her in the condition of a slave.

We shall not attempt to tell what had been passing in the mind of our hero on this subject, but it is quite certain that marriage was not one of the alternatives which he contemplated. He thought of her extraordinary beauty, her engaging simplicity, her gaiety of heart, and the charms of her smile, but not with that purity of intention which, when he considered her innocence, and the gracefulness of spirit with which she submitted to her fate, his better angel prompted him to cherish.

While his mind was thus oscillating between the character of a lover and a protector as they walked towards his new habitation, the Doctor and Belik had fallen into conversation, and it was evident, from what

was passing, for they spoke the dialect of the country, which the traveller did not understand, that the boy was not altogether satisfied with the subject of the physician's discourse. Indeed, Belik spoke so loud and looked so proudly that his demeanour at last attracted the notice of his master, who enquired the cause. "Oh!" says the Doctor, "nothing at all, but this saucy varlet has been telling me, that if you do not take him to Constantinople, he will return home with his grandmother, for that he never would have come with her had he not been assured that he was to go to Constantinople, where he should become Grand Vizier, and ride on horses caparisoned with gold and rubies."

This communication interested his master not a little, it afforded him some insight into the motives which sustained the jocund spirit of the boy in his slavery, and it led him to request the Doctor to ask whether his sister did not also expect to become a Sultana. "No," replied Belik, "because she

is already betrothed to Hafid of the valley, and they so love one another that she does not care where she is taken, since she has been taken from him. But for me, I will go to Constantinople: I would as soon be an eagle, and sit in my nest on the cliffs of the mountain, as be a Christian's slave in this town of the spiders," for so he denominated the cotton manufacturers of Hagi-khanboul.

His master was not perfectly well satisfied with this information respecting the love of Zeryda and Hafid of the valley, but the Doctor made light of it. "These sort of love affairs," said he, "are very common among the boys and girls before they are sold; but when that takes place, Cupid blows out his torch—Cupid blows out his torch," repeated the Doctor, pleased with his classical personification, "and they think no more of them than the birds do of the mates they paired with last year."

After having inspected the simple prepa-

rations of the cottage, the Doctor sent Belik to his residence to tell his grandmother and Zeryda to come home, and that the Padrona, with her mother and the cherub, were to come with them. Our hero was a little disconcerted by this interference of the Doctor, and thought it somehow precipitate; indeed, he said as much; "Poh! poh!" replied Doctor Rubardo, "it must come to this at last, leave it all to me, I know how to manage these things. It is a physician's duty to put people in the way of providing substitutes for his patients, otherwise his trade would soon be at an end, so leave the management of this matter to me."

There was a time when the traveller would have laughed at this, but it then displeased him. It broke in upon some feelings of compassion and tenderness, and while he was regretting too that he should have exposed himself to the temptations of his fatal purchase. But Belik had bounded away on his errand with the elastic step of

a young antelope, and in the course of a few minutes after, a chorus of female tongues, in which the little shrill appogituras of infantine glee were occasionally heard, announced that the ladies were coming with the cherub to the cottage.

CHAPTER XXI.



Love, like its emblem fire, begets itself,
And when unkindled in two faithful hearts,
Mounts in one flame, and rising as it burns,
Points to the heavenly source from whence it come.

THE WORD OF HONOUR.

HAFID, the son of **Hassan**, was the fairest and bravest of all the Georgian youths that guarded their flocks on the verdant pastures of Mount Caucasus. His father was renowned for his courage, and his mother for her beauty. At their bridal the daughters of the mountain and the sons of the valley, for so their respective tribes were distinguished, assembled in greater numbers than had ever been known; so much was the bold Courser of the plain admired by his friends, and the Flower of the falling waters beloved by her companions.

But that festival of gaiety and gratulation was almost the last happy day of their lives. In the course of the same week in which it had been celebrated, a troop of marauding freebooters from beyond the hills, plundered the village where they resided. Hassan received a mortal wound in the defence of his flock, and expired with the heroism that became the noble manliness of his character.

His widow in the fulness of time became the mother of Hafid, but the grief that she suffered for the loss of her husband, was, when too late, but for a moment alleviated by the birth of a man child. She wept over her infant, the son of her only love, and died.

The mother of Zeryda and Belik was her friend. She took the orphan and nursed him from her own bosom with Zeryda, and the children grew up together, the most beautiful of their race. But Hafid was dearest to the shepherds, for they remembered with sorrow the hapless fate of his parents.

Their childhood was passed in the sim-

plicity of the pastoral life. The wandering tale-tellers from Arabia, were their only instructors, but they heard with less delight the stories of the magnificent caliphs and the genii, than the shepherd's songs which commemorated the lives and bewailed the destiny of the Courser of the plain, and the Flower of the fallings waters. It was the beauty and affection of Hafid's parents that they sang, and Zeryda listened with pleasure to the songs that delighted Hafid.

As they grew up, the friends of his father awakened the emulation of Hafid, by recounting the exploits of the Courser of the plain, and Zeryda, moved with lighter gracefulness in the dance, where she was compared to the Flower of the falling waters. The misfortunes of Hafid's parents had thus become a tie between them, which lent a sentiment to their hearts, when affection was heightened into passion, far more tender and interesting than was known among the shepherds of their romantic region.

It was the expectation alike of the tribes of the valley and the mountain, that Hafid and Zeryda would be united, but the father of her mother died ; then her father went to the Persian war, and her mother also died, and she was left with her brother Belik, a burden to the old age of their grandmother. Hafid had no flocks, he was but the servant of a shepherd, though he wore the turban of a chief, and in his bosom possessed the glowing heart of a hero. Poverty had long been the inheritance of the beautiful race of Suliman, and the aged woman could only provide for her beautiful orphans and her old age by taking them to the slave dealers, according to the wonted custom of her country.

Hafid was overwhelmed with sorrow ; he wept for Zeryda, and chided his fortune. The habits of obedience in which she had been educated, only allowed her to sigh, as her tears flowed when she bade him adieu for ever.

Early in the morning, after their separa-

tion, the old woman descended with the orphans to Hagikhanboul, where they met with their uncle Suliman, and were sold to the traveller. The same day Hafid was missed among the shepherds. No one had seen him return from the hamlet on the hill where Zeryda resided, and the dreadful thunder storm, and the fall of the evalanch in their valley, made them apprehensive that some calamity had befallen him. But Hafid had watched the course of his mistress; he had followed her at a distance, and, in the fine delusion of youthful passion, solaced his imagination with the idea of offering himself as a slave also to whoever should become her purchaser, without reflecting on any consequences, thinking only of the happiness of being still near her.

But, bold as Hafid was among the shepherds, and resolute as a lover, there was a simplicity and diffidence in his character, which for some time prevented him from carrying the latter part of his design into effect. He concealed himself among the

trees and bushes round the house of the physician, watching, with an eager eye, the door, from the moment that he had seen Zeryda enter. A thousand conflicting emotions agitated his spirit when he heard Belik calling her and the other females to come to his master, and when he saw them going together, with the Padrona in her gayest attire, his heart was fired with the pangs of jealousy and fear: still, however, he remained in his hiding place till he saw the physician and his family returning home, nor had he the resolution to move till the shades of evening had darkened the valley, and the last rays of the sun had long ceased to gild the snowy peaks and pinnacles of the mountains.

At last, however, he ventured to steal softly towards the cottage of the traveller. He advanced with wary steps, and reached it unobserved. The evening was warm, and the door was open; a lamp was lighted, and from behind a tree before the door he saw the beautiful Zeryda setting on the

sofa beside the traveller. The old woman and Belik were in an inner apartment, but had they been present with all the glories of the Sultan's seraglio, the wretched Hafid would have seen but this sight.

He watched them with greedy eyes, and saw the traveller contemplate the beautiful form of Zeryda. She sat with downcast looks, and her face and neck were often suffused with blushes: she sighed deeply, and her master took her by the hand and pressed it to his bosom. The grasp of Hafid was in the same instant on his ataghan, and he was on the point of springing forward to plunge it in the heart of the traveller, when Zeryda burst into a flood of tears, and, with an accent of indescribable tenderness, exclaimed, "Ah! it is not Hafid." Hafid was in a moment at her feet, and with a feeble fluttering shriek of surprize, she fainted in his arms. The traveller, astonished at so sudden an interruption, had started up, and was in the act of seizing the intruder with fury, and throwing

him from the cottage, when Belik came from the inner room, and seeing who had come, addressed Hafid by name, and flew to share his embrace.

The simple articulation of that name at once explained the whole scene, and broke the spell which had almost overpowered the virtue of the penitent, who, with a throbbing heart instantly quitted the room, and returned to the Doctor's house, where he resolved to remain till he could procure a guide either to conduct him back to Abel-jazeer, or on to Astrahan.

In this prompt action of the moment, we dare not, in conscience, venture to say that the traveller's feelings were quite so pure as Bayards, when he restored his captive unransomed, and to the story of Scipio's continence, we can only presume to allude. Still, however, though some of the chagrin of disappointment was mingled at first with his satisfaction, a better sentiment soon subdued all its grossness, and he felt his spirit growing brighter and stronger above the sins with which he was beset, as the flame that rises

amidst the smoke of a fire made of green timber, struggles for a time, but in the end blazes out and up towards the heavens, illuminating and gladdening all within its influence and lustre.

CHAPTER XXII.

“And Jacob loved Rachel, and said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel.”

GENESIS.

DOCTOR RUBARDO, who was by no means satisfied with the traveller's determination, told him it was quite ridiculous to let the affection of Zeryda and Hafid stand in the way of his own pleasures. “In fact,” said the Doctor, “this world was never made for people to give way to these sort of sentimental feelings: who do you think would ever swallow drugs, even from the hands of a Galen or an Esculapius, if he consulted only his feelings? no, no, friend, the judgment—the judgment alone should be consulted, in all things that concern what is good for us, and

Zeryda is such a beautiful creature—but I had all along a suspicion that there would be some mischance in the business; for that young varlet, Belik, from the first had no more respect for me, than if I had been as illiterate as their mountain doctors, who cure wounds with herbs and other appliances and practices, most disgraceful to surgery, as if Nature had ever been at the trouble to make a doctor without the aid of Art. But, however, take your own way; the sofa you had this morning is again at your service. I am going to my wife, and I hope and trust the child will behave himself to night; in the morning we shall have some talk. By the way, I hope you say your prayers at night: I always do: but you have been very foolish. However, I must bid you good night:” and with these words the Doctor flounced out of the room, and the skirts of his purple pelisse catching hold of a nail at the door, its holes were multiplied without any thing being added to its beauty.

Scarcely, however, had the Doctor re-

tired, when a loud knocking was heard at the door, and several voices in the Armenian language; those of the slaves, their grandmother and Hafid, claimed admittance. The traveller, without duly considering the consequences, opened the door, and the whole party rushed in. The old woman, with tears in her eyes, addressed him with great earnestness; Zeryda stood weeping before him, while Hafid held her by the hand, and was more eloquent in his appeal than the grandmother with all her elocution, or Belik, who ever and anon expostulated, with great emphasis, also with his master. As the traveller did not understand a word of their language, he could only guess at the object of their intrusion, but Belik, sharp and adroit, was the first who discovered the necessity of having an interpreter, and, in the same moment, knocked at the door which led to the Doctor's haram.

Doctor Rubardo being a little vexed when he left our hero—a state of mind which often enables the possessors to do

things more briskly than usual,—had, short as the interval was, undressed himself and lain down, and this disturbance did not tend to appease his humour. He started up in actual anger, and coming to the haram door, looked out from behind it, for he was stark naked, enquired what was the matter. Belik, in a few words, explained all, and the Doctor, in total oblivion of his primitive appearance, stepped out with an indignant bounce, to set matters to rights, but the first effect was to send the ladies screaming to the door, covering their faces, which, however, restored the recollection of the Doctor, who immediately returned into the haram, and came back well wrapped in his pelisse.

After hearing the appellants, the Doctor told the traveller that Hafid was willing to herd his flocks for life, if he would but restore Zeryda to liberty. “But what advantage,” said the Doctor sapiently, “can that be to you, who have no flocks to herd; and as for that pestilent impudence, Belik, he is in open rebellion, and says, that if you do not

take him to Constantinople, and sell him to the Grand Vizier, he will run away, for it was only on condition that he was to be thus dealt with, that he consented to be sold at this time."

Notwithstanding the manner in which the Doctor reported the proceedings, and his ludicrous ill will towards Belik, enough was disclosed to excite a powerful emotion in the heart of our hero, and feelings which, although merely compassionate, were yet allied to the noblest sympathies of our common nature. He looked at Hafid, whose fine manly symmetry he had not before particularly noticed, and whose simple, but dignified air, was rendered more interesting by a cast of thoughtfulness, which threw over the natural frankness of his countenance a wavering shade of sadness and diffidence. He reflected on the patriarchal simplicity of the offer to serve him as a portion of the ransom of Zeryda, and confessed to himself that, till that moment, he had never experienced the pure unmingled delightfulness of moral admiration. Nor

was the appearance of Zeryda less affecting; she had again taken her lover by the hand, and with a downcast modesty and resignation, that said more to the heart and spirit of her master at that moment, than words could express, she convinced him that her happiness was dependent on his bounty, and that fortune had bestowed on him the rare blessing of having it in his power to do a magnanimous action. It was impossible, indeed, to hesitate: he requested the Doctor to tell them that Zeryda was free without ransom, and that the money he had given to her grandmother, should be her dowery.

Zeryda being thus relieved from the obligations of duty to him as her master, threw herself into the arms of Hafid, and wept with joy upon his bosom. The shepherd only for a moment pressed her to his heart; disentangling himself from her embrace, he knelt down before their benefactor, and raising his foot, placed it on his own neck, as the only method by which he could convey an idea of the vast throb of gratitude

and obligation, which at that moment exceeded all other modes of acknowledgment. The traveller turned aside to conceal his own emotion, which was suddenly stopped by a yell from Belik, who had received a hearty benediction from the Doctor's palm of the hand on the cheek. The mischievous boy, while the Doctor's attention was occupied with the little scene which we have described, had most irreverently lifted a kitten from the cat, and hung her at the windowed raggedness of the Doctor's pelisse, and she, scarcely less prankish, had fixed her claws in his naked postique parts.

The lamentations of Belik were not, however, of long duration, for when he understood that his sister was restored to freedom, he became clamorous to know what was to be done with him; and not to take up too much time with minute details, we have only to mention that it was agreed he should go with the traveller to Constantinople, where he was to be delivered to his uncle Suliman, the Tartar, who would, in all

probability, easily procure him a place in the numerous household of the Grand Vizier.

There was, however, one little matter in this business, not so quickly settled as might have been expected. The old woman was reluctant to give up to Zeryda the whole price which she had received for her, and our traveller, whose fancy of the moral habits of this pastoral family, had been raised to a high pitch of enthusiasm, by their beauty and artlessness, was mortified to find that human nature was sordid, even though nursed in the mountain air of Armenia, and that age was here as avaricious as in the foetid streets and receptacles of the European cities. After some altercation, however, the old woman at last consented to give up a part of the money, but she considered it very unreasonable to be obliged to do so; and really, we must confess that her argument was not very well answered; for, as she said, having sold Zeryda, and got the price, it was hard that if the master chose to give away his slave, that she should be obliged to refund the price. The

Doctor, however, by dint of scolding, forced her to comply, and she delivered the sequins with a reluctant hand. The traveller, who had but imperfectly understood what was passing, as soon as he received them, gave them to Hafid, who had listened in silence, and taken no part in the contention. When, Hafid received the money, he whispered a few words to Zeryda, and immediately returned the whole to her grandmother. Peace and contentment were thus restored. Zeryda and her lover, with Belik and the old woman, returned to the traveller's cottage, and the Doctor again retired to the Elysium of his haram, leaving his guest to ruminate on the events of a day which he thought the happiest he had ever spent.

CHAPTER XXIII.



A band of fierce barbarians from the hill,
Rush'd like a torrent down upon our vale,
Sweeping the herds and flocks.

HOME.

BEFORE the sun had risen over the mountains, Belik was at the Doctor's door knocking for admission. The Doctor had a patient in the jaws of death, and when he heard the noise he was reluctant to rise, supposing it a message from the sick bed; for it is a rule with the faculty never, if possible, to be in at the death. This delay only made the boy knock more furiously, and at last to shout and bellow, by which the Doctor discovered his voice, and losing all temper, came rushing furiously to the window, and scolded him from behind the paper that served for glass. A violent

altercation ensued, which in the end awoke the traveller, who, on enquiring the cause of the disturbance, was informed that Hafid, with the old woman and Zeryda, had departed for home, and that Belik was as hungry as a cormorant. "That boy," said the Doctor as he concluded, "will certainly be a great man, for he has no manner of respect for me. He gives himself airs of command already, and I never knew one of these masterful whelps, that did not in the end prove so. The creature has the very spirit of the devil in him, for although he has been making all this riot and racket, and barking at me, he keeps his temper, and is so full of glee and frolic, that I see if he stays long here, he will get the upper hand of me; but I will tame him. I will bring down his spirit with a dose of physic, otherwise there will be no living with him." Neither this information nor opinion were agreeable to our hero. He was disconcerted that Belik's friends had gone away, as it was his intention to induce them to take the boy back, and he was vexed to think how much he

must be retarded in his journey by a boy at once too young to be of any use, and too self-willed to be manageable. However, after Belik was admitted, he consulted the Doctor more particularly; and, as he had now no motive for remaining longer at Hagikhanboul, Belik, after being appeased with a slice of bread, was sent to the post house to engage horses to carry them to the next town. The boy acquitted himself so well in this task, and showed so much alertness and intelligence, that his master began to think he would prove less troublesome than he had feared, especially when the horses were brought to the door, and when he found that Belik, of his own suggestion, had, with the help of the Padrona's mother, provided a basket well stored with provender, for their journey. The Doctor's good opinion of the young slave was indeed confirmed by this circumstance, and before parting the two were on the most jocose terms of familiarity.

All things being in readiness for mounting, the traveller, as in duty bound, paid

another visit to the haram, in order to present the expected regalo to the old woman, for the kindness and hospitality with which he had been treated. He then took his leave, but the good-natured eccentric Rubardo insisted on seeing him to the end of the village.

As they were passing through the town, the pace of the horses being accommodated to that of the Doctor, Belik happened to observe one of the armed shepherds of the mountain hastily passing, and halted his horse to speak to him. What passed between them consisted only of a few sentences; but the information made such deep impression on the boy that, when he rejoined his master, he begged the Doctor to bid him halt, as he had something very important to tell.

“It was fortunate,” exclaimed the Doctor, “that I came so far with you, for without me, you could not have told him this important something. What is it?”

Belik then informed him that a predatory band of Georgian freebooters had entered

the passes of the mountains, and that his acquaintance was sent to warn the shepherds, that they might scatter their flocks over the higher pastures, and unite to repel the invaders. "Our friends will miss Hafid of the valley," said the boy, "but I hope he will be with them in time to disperse the Georgians, like blossoms of the spring before the blast from the hill."

"As to dispersing the Georgians," replied the Doctor, "there may be more than two words about that; but this is alarming news, and I do not think your master should venture until the issue of the affair is known."

"I tell you," cried Belik, "that they will disperse the Georgians—they will give them to the vultures of the rock, and the ravens of the forest; and my master would deserve to die by the arrow of a Georgian before he could draw his sword, were he to halt in his journey."

Doctor Rubardo interpreted what passed to the traveller, and urged him to return; but, much to the satisfaction of the courageous young slave, he resisted all his entreaties.

“Then,” said the Doctor, “I can do no more for you, and I hope no harm will befall you, but in travelling through the changeful climates of these hills and vallies, and amidst so many dangers, I trust you will pay due attention to the concerns both of your soul and body; I beg you, therefore, to accept, as my most efficacious advice, that you will say your prayers regularly, and keep your bowels open, for I wish you all manner of happiness and prosperity in this world, but when we meet in the next, I doubt not you will have to tell me how you were barbarously murdered by the Georgian robbers.”

A tear rushed into the Doctor's eye as he concluded this speech, which was delivered with the most sincere and pathetic gravity, and he walked homeward without once looking round, after parting from his guests, who set forward at the brisk rate with which it is customary to pass along the defenceless roads of that romantic country.

During their ride to the first post-house,

the travellers met with no adventure; they left the valley of Hagikhanboul, and traversed an extensive upland, which descended with an easy declivity towards a wide plain, beyond which the Georgian mountains raised their verdant breasts, and those snowy summits which vie in altitude with the lofty ridges of Caucasus. The post-house stood at the northern edge of this declivity, where it was bounded by an abrupt mountain, which protruded like a promontory in the sea upon the plain, and along the bottom of which the remainder of the road of their first day's journey lay.

When they had changed horses, and were proceeding at an easy gallop to double this cape, for we can use no term more appropriate, Belik suddenly halted, and motioning with his hand to his master and the postillion to stop, leaped from his horse and applied his ear to the ground. He then gave him to understand by signs that there were several horsemen coming towards them, and that it would be prudent, until it was known what they were, to retire with

their horses among the thickets which skirted the road and extended to the cliffy sides of the hill.

His master, on remarking this sagacity of the boy, began to think with Doctor Rubardo, that he was indeed destined to be a great man, and followed him into the thickets, where they had not long concealed themselves, when a party of ten of the Georgians passed on horseback. After allowing them to be out of sight, Belik again leaped on to his saddle, and with a triumphant look that indicated a consciousness of the service he had performed, rode out upon the highway, and by his gestures urged his master and the postillion to make haste.

CHAPTER XXIV.



RUPERT. Pat out the light: tread softly—hush—go
on—

Some one did pass me, more than one went by.
I touched a hand, and had there been but one,
That touch would have discovered us.

ADOLPH. ————— Step on,
That hand was mine.

THE SECRET.

WHEN the travellers reached the khan, at the second post establishment, a considerable bustle was observed among the postillions who were there, and Belik was immediately seen among the busiest. It was evident to our hero, although he did not understand their language, that they had either heard some very interesting news, or expected some important event. As he had no interpreter to explain what was passing, he sat down on the steps of the stair which

led from the court of the khan to the open gallery, round which the chambers for travellers were arranged over the stables for the horses, and watched their motions, and studied the physiognomy of the different characters before him. He soon discovered, by the active movements of his slave, that he was much interested in what had taken, or was to take place, but that there was in the end a method and considerateness in the deportment of the boy that indicated thought and reflection far beyond his years. His wonted hilarity was entirely absorbed in some grave and serious pursuit, and it was clear to his master that he was not only in search of information, but ascertaining the dispositions of the different postillions. At last he seemed to have found one to his mind, and after a few sentences had passed between them, his master observed them mutually acknowledge by a tacit expression that they understood each other. In the course of a few minutes after, Belik having procured some coffee, carried it up the stairs on which his master was

sitting, and, by a significant touch of his foot in passing, indicated that he wished him to follow.

The traveller had been too much struck with what he had previously observed, not to obey the signal, and no sooner were they in one of the rooms by themselves, and the door shut, than the slave began to whisper, and use the most emphatic gestures to enforce what he was saying: but he failed to make his master comprehend his meaning, as he was utterly ignorant of the language in which he spoke.

The boy was exceedingly disconcerted when he perceived the inutility of his unintelligible discourse, and for some time seemed almost ready to weep with vexation, but, in a moment, as if seized with a sudden inspiration, he darted out of the apartment, and in a few seconds returned with a lighted lamp, which he placed on the floor. He then threw himself down, and pretended to fall asleep, every now and then opening his eyes, and gazing about as if he listened.

When he had performed this little panto-

mime, until he saw that he was understood, he blew out the lamp, and got up softly, and walked cautiously about as if in search of something, and having lifted a whip which was lying on the floor, he trailed it after him as if he was leading a horse to the door, where he feigned to mount it as children ride upon walking sticks, and then galloped off. All this, although somewhat hieroglyphical, was descriptive of a plan of escape, but the precise object in view was not so evident till the boy signified that he must have some money.

There was too much intelligence in what Belik had been doing to allow his master to hesitate; he accordingly opened his purse and offered it to the boy, who took from it three sequins, nodding significantly, as if to say it was enough. He then went out, and the traveller followed and watched him, till he had found the same postillion with whom he had seemingly concerted a secret understanding. The boy said nothing to the man, but warily showed him the money in his hand, and returned immediately to his mas-

ter, whom by every gesture that he thought calculated to make himself understood, he urged to take some refreshment, and then to go to sleep, although the sun was still above the hills.

All this evidently indicated that Belik had formed a plan for them to leave the khan early and secretly in the night, and that for this purpose he had bribed, by a promise of the three sequins, one of the postillions, a circumstance, which of itself implied the existence of danger at the khan, as these men are bound at all times to obey the firmans of travellers, and honestly could, at no time, have any reason to prevent them from going or remaining, according to their own pleasure. However, Belik could speak no European language, and his master understood not a word of his dialect, so that until they fell in with some dragoman to interpret between them, in signs alone consisted the only mode of mental communication which they mutually possessed. But the slave had shown, both on the road, and in this affair, so much

sagacity and prudence that, notwithstanding his youth, he gained completely the confidence of his master, who submitted himself entirely to his directions.

The traveller laid himself down on the floor and soon fell asleep; Belik sat at a little distance to watch him, but the fatigue of the day's journey gradually overpowered his anxiety, and he also yielded to the influence of Morpheus. He was, however the first that awoke, and when he unclosed his eyes, he started up in alarm, for it was quite dark, and the khan all hushed, except the occasional movements and snorting of the horses in the stable under their apartment. Belik, however, before disturbing his master, stepped softly to the door, and went down the stairs which led to the yard, where, after groping about for a few minutes, he found the postillion waiting for him.

No words passed: the postillion immediately went into the stable, and took out three horses to the gate of the khan, while the slave returned to rouse his master. Un-

fortunately, however, the traveller had, in his absence awoke, and missing the boy, whom, as the door was left open, which he discovered by the freshness of the air that came into the room, he naturally concluded had gone to assist in the preparations for their flight, and he stepped out into the gallery with so soft and cautious a tread that Belik, who was at the same moment returning up the steps, did not hear him, and his own steps being no less silent, they passed each undiscovered in the darkness of the gallery.

The intrepid boy was exceedingly alarmed when, on entering the apartment, he discovered that his master had left it; the hazards of their situation rendering it most imprudent for him to make any sound or noise which might disturb the other inmates of the khan. But there was no time to lose. It was necessary that the traveller should be found; but the khan was very spacious, and the night was one of those of thick darkness, which so often occur in mountainous countries, when the atmos-

phere is full of moisture, and clouds hang low upon the sides of the hills.

At the same moment that Belik returned to the door, the postillion had taken the horses to the gate, and his master happening to give a slight accidental cough, he darted forward, and taking hold of his skirt, led him towards them. They mounted and were speedily at the gallop; the traveller, however, was surprized that the hoofs made no noise as they struck the ground. After a short time, his horse chanced to stumble, as if something was entangled with his feet. He halted, and alighting, found that his hoofs were muffled with a piece of cloth stuffed with straw—an ingenious contrivance of the postillion to bring them out of the stable without noise, and to allow them to escape as far as possible unheard.

CHAPTER XXV.



Why, what is this? why lay ye hands upon him?
And in the drowsy and defenceless hour,
When the bold brave man, helpless as a child,
Lies breathing at the mercy of a coward;
Do you with cruel cords so bind his arms?

G. HALITON.

WHEN they had rode briskly about an hour, they reached a turn of the road which brought them suddenly opposite to that part of the eastern horizon where the day was beginning to dawn, by the dim and imperfect grey light of which the traveller discovered the towers and battlements of an ancient fortress on the cliffs immediately above them, while Belik and the postillion obliged him in silence to make haste by the example which they set of whipping

and urging forward their horses. In the course of another hour they reached the town of Gazeljaritz, and as soon as they were safely within the gates, Belik seemed to recover his natural cheerfulness. The postillion, instead of conducting them to the public caravansera, rode directly to the house of a French merchant who had connections in Astrahan. This was another instance of Belik's forethought; he had felt the difficulty of communicating with his master, and had begged the postillion to take them to the house of any Frank merchant, in order that an interpreter might be procured. Monsieur Hamelle received them with the wonted urbanity of his countrymen, and with far more than the usual stinted measure of French hospitality.

This gentleman had been many years an inhabitant of Gazeljaritz, and was well acquainted with the local dialects and the spirit and manners of the adjacent districts. He informed the traveller that the affair between the shepherds, which had occasioned him so much uneasiness, was a thing of very

common occurrence, and that the only risk in his journey was owing to his having Belik with him, who, belonging to the tribe with which the Georgian freebooters were at war, would in all probability have subjected him also to be an object of their vengeance. The Georgians having taken possession of the old fortress of the rock which commanded the only pass that led to the hills where the friends of Belik resided, it was of the utmost consequence that he should therefore get his master safely past it during the night. This, however, was rendered an enterprize of some difficulty, by several of the postillions at the khan being in the interest of the Georgians, and by the party which the travellers avoided on the road being expected back before day light. The address and prudence of Belik, so much superior to his years, effected this purpose in the manner we have described. “Sagacity, however,” said Monsieur Hamelle, in praising the dexterity of the courageous boy, “may be said to be the peculiar characteristic of

these heroic shepherds. They inherit, with the warlike predilections of the Parthians, much of that cunning and skill in planning stratagems, for which that bold and independent race were anciently celebrated."

Strongly pressed by the kindness of his host, our traveller remained several days at Gazeljaritz, during which Belik was seldom in the house, and was evidently much interested in some affair of his own; he seemed averse to have any confidants, and shunned observation; indeed, had he not shown a strange kind of reluctance to prepare for their journey, when he was informed by the dragoman, whom Monsieur Hamelle had procured, that it was his master's intention to depart, he might, perhaps, have escaped all suspicion of being concerned in any undertaking. His shyness, however, had attracted the attention of the acute and observant Frenchman, and his reluctance convinced him that he was engaged in some affair, the successful result of which depended on his continuing a little longer in the town. "Wait," said Monsieur Ha-

melle to his master, “ you are not pressed for time ; wait, I entreat you, the issue of this business—it will probably afford you something to remember with interest when you have returned to Europe.”

For some time the listlessness of our hero had been gradually mastered by an active and prompting principle. His travels had worn out the ennui which benumbed his faculties, and a succession of adventures had roused him from his apathy, especially those in which he had been so recently engaged. In Monsieur Hamelle, he had found an accomplished man of the world, whose conversation, pregnant with excellent practical sense, afforded him an agreeable relaxation, while the singular and premature heroism of his young slave presented a phenomenon that deservedly claimed the particular attention of a mind opening to the contemplation of the springs and motives of characters and actions. He accordingly consented with pleasure in the pressing hospitality of his host, and agreed to remain with him some time longer. This deter-

mination clearly afforded the greatest satisfaction to Belik, who continued his own pursuit with renovated alacrity. His master watched his motions, and soon discovered that he went every morning to the shop of a wool-seller in the bazaar, with whom the shepherds, from the neighbouring mountains, were in the practice of dealing, and that he lingered there the greatest part of the day, entering into conversation with the customers; but, although seemingly unusually playful and diverting, he evidently listened with all his ears to what they said. As soon as the Bazaar-yambashi shut the gates of the bazaar in the evening, Belik retired to a coffee-house, where, in the course of a few minutes, a shepherd, seemingly from a long journey, joined him. It could not, therefore, be doubted that he had opened a correspondence with his friends, and that, by means of the shepherd, he communicated to them what he learnt from time to time among those who frequented the wool-dealer's shop.

It was even so; for, on the evening of the

third day after the period originally fixed for their departure, as his master had laid himself down to sleep without undressing, according to his custom, Belik came into the room, followed by Hafid and a stranger who acted as their interpreter; the boy pretending that their own dragoman had retired for the night to his own lodgings, but it could not be doubted that the stranger was more in their confidence.

The object of this visit, which had been so managed as to take place entirely unknown to any of Monsieur Hamelle's family, was an offer on the part of Hafid, that, if the traveller would set off on the second day following, he would meet him with all his friends at a short distance from the town, and conduct him in safety through the last pass of the mountains, intimating, however, at the same time, not to bring with him any other guards. But, if he did not choose to set out at that time, it was requested, on the part of Belik, that he would permit him to go with Hafid for two days, to see his relations.

There was plainly, in the objects of this visit, something more than was disclosed; but the nobleness of Hafid's deportment had won the confidence of the traveller, and he entertained no fear of any perfidy. He was not, however, prepared to give a decisive answer: he wished, indeed, previously to consult Monsieur Hamelle, and he therefore only promised, that he would either allow Belik to go to his friends next day, or avail himself of Hafid's offer on the following morning; but with this Hafid was not satisfied; he urged him by the interpreter to give a decisive answer, and also to promise that he would say nothing of what had passed to Monsieur Hamelle. The traveller was displeased with this urgency, and remonstrated with Hafid for presuming to dictate conditions to him. Belik, who perceived the turn that the conference was taking, stepped out of the room, and in a moment after returned with several armed shepherds. As soon as Hafid saw them he threw himself on the tra-

veller, and held him firmly down in the bed, while the others, in the same instant, gagged him, and carried him out in their arms with his hands bound.

CHAPTER XXVI.



There was the blossom of much virtue in him,
Frank, noble, wise beyond his years, and brave
As one that knew not what it was to fear.
Prepare his tomb, but not in the green vale,
Let it be high upon the stormy cliffs
Where eagle's perch, and for a monument,
Plant a young laurel, whose perpetual bough
Will wave unharm'd amidst the fires of Jove.

THE TRIAL.

THE shepherds carried the traveller into the garden which was connected with the city wall, and, without interchanging a word, transported him to the outside, and placed him on the back of a horse with which several others were standing in readiness. This singular outrage they performed so expeditiously, and with so little noise, that the family of Monsieur Hamelle had

no idea of what had taken place till the next morning, and long after their guest had been carried to the camp of the mountaineers.

The traveller was totally at a loss to conceive their motive for such an ungrateful return for the kindness with which he had restored Zeryda to Hafid, and was justly indignant when, as soon as they had carried him to some distance from the town, having unbound his arms and taken the gag from his mouth, they merely said through the interpreter, that they only intended to keep him till after the battle. “Your life,” said Hafid, “is as dear to me as my own heart’s blood, but had you remained in the Frank’s house, you would, perhaps, have told him what had passed. He would have told others, and our enemies have many ears—they are as cunning as foxes, and some of them would have guessed our thoughts; but, fear no ill, we will place you in safety, and when the battle is fought, whether we gain or lose, you shall be restored to the Frank, for those with whom we

intend to leave you will know when they are to conduct you back to the town, if we return no more."

The traveller, as the interpreter was explaining Hafid's speech, perceived that there was much of the ore of true virtue in the rude simplicity of these barbarians, and with a spirit that fired their enthusiasm, he declared that he would not be left in custody, but accompany them to battle; that he had himself been in many a well-contested field, and would fight with them to the last.

They, however, said nothing: they felt too much; but they conducted him to their encampment, if such it might be called, which consisted only of a number of stakes placed in a circle, within which the horses were fastened.

The number of the shepherds might be about two hundred and fifty, and they were waiting at this place for the return of the Georgians, who were scouring their valleys. Belik had gathered at the wool-sellers, from among the other shepherds who frequented

the shop, and were not then at war with either party, an account of their enemies' movements, and by what road they intended to return. They were not, however, expected for three days, and Hafid, in gratitude for the restoration of his Zeryda, had obtained the consent of his friends to guard his benefactor beyond the track of danger, while Belik, in order to share the glory of his tribe, had made Hafid promise to procure, if possible, permission for him to join them in the attempt to intercept their foes, a stratagem which he had himself been chiefly instrumental in planning: circumstances which elucidated the outrage in Monsieur Hamelle's house.

The information, however, which Belik had obtained, was not in all points correct; for in the course of the day a small reinforcement which came in from a distance, assured them that the enemy was already returning, and would undoubtedly endeavour to get beyond Gazeljaritz that afternoon. Accordingly, about an hour before sun-set, the scouts which had been sent out

to watch, came in and described the approach of the Georgians. The shepherds immediately gathered up their arms, and mounting their horses, descended from the rising ground where they were encamped, to a woody hollow in the side of a narrow valley, through which it was necessary for the ravagers to pass. They remained concealed beneath the underwood till the greater part of the cattle and sheep, the booty of this Asiatic foray, had gone by, when they rushed out upon their foes with sudden shouts and great spirit. The Georgians, however, were more numerous, and although taken by surprise, and at first thrown into confusion, soon rallied. The shepherds fought with great bravery, and our hero aided them with an experienced arm. Hafid displayed the calmness and grandeur of heroism, and Belik, with a vivacity and energy that attracted even the admiration of the Georgians, was seen in every part of the field, nimble, fearless, and courageous. The shepherds, however,

were defeated; they were, it is true, not exactly obliged to quit the field, nor were their foes so confident of having gained a victory as to follow their spoil which was driven on before them. But the night obliged them to desist, and the shepherds soon after retired to a short distance from the immediate scene of the battle.

Hafid and his friends had proudly anticipated a great victory, and were extremely mortified by their ill success. A council of war was held, and the elder shepherds were of opinion that they should abandon all idea of renewing the unequal contest. While they were thus deliberating, and had indeed in a great measure resolved to return home, Belik started forward, and addressed them with great vehemence. Some of the old men smiled at what he said—others listened with attention, but by far the greater number regarded him with scorn as a forward boy. His master marked his demeanour, and having formed a high opinion of his sagacity, requested to know

what he was saying. "He advises the elders," said the interpreter, "to send a message to the Georgians, to tell them that if they do not retire home, and allow us to drive back our cattle which they have taken, we will cut them in pieces to-morrow, and not sheath the sword till we have put every one of their tribe to death."

The traveller was struck with the bravery of this idea, and considering that it was formed under circumstances of disaster and defeat, he bade the interpreter request that it might be deliberately considered. Hafid, whom the sense of gratitude prompted to respect the traveller, seconded the proposal with so much earnestness, that in the end the bold expedient suggested by Belik was adopted, and messengers sent accordingly to the Georgians.

The battle had been so well fought on both sides, that although the number of the slain was not great, the wounded were numerous. The Georgians, dispirited by the loss they had suffered, conceiving from the hardihood of the shepherds proposal that

they must be assured of reinforcements, requested time to return an answer. Hafid, who was at the head of the embassy, seeing the effect so immediately produced, told them they must determine quickly, and in the course of a few minutes they consented to deliver up half the spoil on being allowed to retire with the remainder unmolested. This, after some scruple on his part, he consented to accept, on condition that the cattle were immediately restored, the Georgians also giving hostages to return directly to their hills, and not molest the shepherds of Mount Caucasus while the leaves were on the trees.

The terms being thus adjusted, and the cattle driven back, Hafid returned with the hostages to the great joy and amazement of the shepherds. The wisdom and heroism of Belik were justly applauded as the indications of great talent, but this did not pass unnoticed by the hostages, who, perceiving how much their friends had been outwitted, were determined if possible to effect their escape, and apprise them of the true state

of their enemies' circumstances ; nor was the opportunity to accomplish this long wanting. While the shepherds in the obscurity of the dawning day were busy in apportioning the cattle, according to their respective losses and claims, one of the hostages escaped, and before he was missed, the alarm was given that the Georgians were preparing again for battle. All was confusion among the shepherds ; horse and arms were seized in haste, and the sun, in rising, beheld the same combatants again more furiously engaged than when he withdrew his beams from them on the preceding evening. In this second affair the shepherds were entirely routed ; Hafid, with a few of his followers, and the traveller, were the last to quit the field ; but in the end they also were obliged to retire. Belik, mortally wounded, was left behind ; he was pierced in the right leg and arm with two arrows almost in the same moment, and when he was lying, as it were, transfixed by them on the ground, he tried first to pluck out the one and then the other, but the barbs had passed entirely

through the flesh, and it was out of his power. Still he was not deserted by that fearlessness and fortitude with which nature seemed to have endowed him for heroic purposes; for finding his efforts unavailing, he laid himself out as if unconscious of pain to wait the result of the conflict; in this situation he was trampled almost at once to death by the horse of a Georgian; and it was in this mangled and hopeless condition that he was abandoned by his friends, with the other ruins of the field.

On the following morning after the Georgians had resumed their march, Hafid with the traveller returned to seek for him, and they found him dead. His body and limbs were dreadfully disfigured, but his face was calm and wore something that might almost be called a smile, for the features were not shrunk, the spirit indeed had but just departed, and he was still warm. Hafid wept bitterly over the brother of Zeryda, nor could the traveller himself withhold the tribute of a tear to the spirit of youthful heroism, so prematurely cut off

from all the bright hopes of its young ambition, and given to the world only as it were to show how little value, in the general estimate of things, is set by Providence on the most promising appearance of human talent or genius.

CHAPTER XXVII.



Wherein of antre's vast, and deserts idle,
Rough quarries, rocks and hills, whose heads touch heaven,
It was my hint to speak, such was the process,
And of the cannibals that each other eat,
And anthropophagi, and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders.

OTHELLO.

As soon as Belik was interred, Hafid conducted his master back to Gazeljaritz, but he left him at the gate. The heart of the shepherd was too full to allow him to speak, even if the traveller had understood his language; his farewell was, however, much more affecting than words could have expressed. He stooped down and lifting a handful of earth, sprinkled it on his head, while he laid his hand on his heart—a simple but most emphatic assurance that he would

bear him in remembrance with affection while he lived.

Monsieur Hamelle was delighted to see his guest return in safety, and described the consternation and alarm which his absence had occasioned. When the traveller related his adventure. "Did I not tell you," said he, "that something extraordinary would come out of the boy's plot—I am glad, however, that you are well rid of him, for there is an untameable spirit in the blood of these mountaineers, that will never allow their manners to blend properly with the usages of civilized life. They have too much mind, they exert too much thought and reflection in all they do, and occasion as much trouble by their extreme intelligence as some others do by their stupidity. I have tried them often, both as labourers and domestic servants, but they are of too generous a race for the drudgery of either. They are, compared with our European peasantry, what the fleet Arabian coursers are to the cumbrous horses of Flanders."

The traveller thought these observations of Monsieur Hamelle sensible enough, but he thought them somewhat cold-hearted.— They served, however, as a prelude to a conversation which had the effect of convincing him, that it was not in a state of barbarous simplicity that the human character was to be studied, for any useful purpose, by one whose habits and inclinations were essentially European. He accordingly resolved to change his plan, and instead of roving, as he had hitherto done, without a motive, from place to place, as if his only object in life had been to traverse the globe and to wear out time, he determined to turn his course towards Christendom. In this he was encouraged by his host, who told him that he had then a vessel loading at the nearest sea-port, only two days ride distant, in which he advised him to take his passage to Constantinople. “The vessel,” however said Monsieur Hamelle, “is bound for Venice, and if it suits your views, when you have reached Constantinople, you may go on

with her to that gay city, where if you have never been, you will not find it the less agreeable, by your having been so long in these remote and barbarous regions."

The traveller took the Frenchman's advice, and in due time was again at Constantinople; he, however, had no motive to land. Having concerted with Monsieur Hamelle all that was requisite for the transfer of his money concerns, he proceeded directly to Venice, where he arrived after a passage of six weeks from his embarkation.

According to the wonted custom, he was, with the vessel, placed under quarantine; but having applied for permission, through the medium of Monsieur Hamelle's correspondents, to take up his abode in the Lazaretto, they procured for his guardiano, an old man, who was in much request by persons under quarantine, on account of his talent for improvisatorial tale-telling. His stories amused them in the tediousness of their captivity, and he had the art of addressing himself so well to the peculiar taste of his auditors, that he was justly considered

as a person possessed of a very singular genius. He was, however, destitute even of the rudiments of education—he could neither write nor read, and those who listened to him were so much interested both by his matter and his manner, that none of them ever thought of taking notes of his narratives, and Andrea could never repeat the same tale twice, in the same manner or with the same incidents. But what constituted the rarest beauty of his art, was the power with which he identified himself with the fictions of his fancy, insomuch that he often deceived his auditors into a belief that his stories were actually his own adventures.

Our hero, who was, of course, totally unacquainted with his character, regarded him at first with that sort of negligence which is sometimes mistaken for haughtiness. Andrea had too much experience of the world to be piqued at this, but he was determined, nevertheless, to be indemnified. Accordingly in his attendance, he assumed the most awkward manner possible, acting as if he was wholly

abstracted with some great inward sorrow—fetching profound sighs, and looking in the most woeful and heart-broken manner. By these artifices he greatly excited the sympathy and the interest of his charge, who began to evince towards him a profound feeling of compassion. “Ah,” said Andrea, “I have not been accustomed to this base and abject condition, I am a man of noble birth, I was born to high expectations, but fortune is capricious, tyrants are cruel, law-suits are uncertain, and witnesses often false.”

Having thus interested the traveller in his favour, he related to him a long story of adventures and sufferings, all of which he described as his own, but not one of which he had ever experienced. Our hero was profoundly affected to have met with a nobleman who had been so grievously persecuted by fortune, and treated Andrea, for the rest of that day, with the greatest respect and commiseration.

The next morning Andrea's humour had changed; he had entirely forgot or cared

not to remember what had passed the preceding day, and actually irritated the traveller by bellowing and singing, without taste or melody, some of the lowest ribald songs of the gondoliers. "Where, in the name of peace and harmony, did you pick up such abject nonsense," enquired the traveller,—and Andrea proceeded to tell him a long desultory tale of a series of adventures that he supposed himself to have undergone in the capacity of a gondolier, the son of a fisherman on the Brenta.

In the whole course of his wanderings, our traveller had never met with any thing so extraordinary. In the character of the unfortunate nobleman, Andrea had evinced the possession of the most refined and polished language—his gestures were full of elegance, and an air of dignity, subdued by misfortune, drew largely upon the generosity of his auditor. But now he appeared one of the coarsest and vilest of a base class; his voice, his looks, his deportment, and his phraseology were vulgar in the extreme, and but for the relief of a dry and whimsical

humour that forced laughter in despite of disgust, his tale and conduct would have been insufferable.

This display, however, had the effect of opening the eyes of the traveller to the peculiar talents of Andrea, and before the term of the quarantine expired, he had engaged him for his servant. In doing this he had no design at any imposition; but it so happened, when they were set at liberty, that Andrea, by a slight deviation in his wonted manner, gave such an account of the adventures of his master in the remote countries which he had visited, that the traveller, without being aware of the circumstance, became every where an object of uncommon interest and curiosity.

The correspondents of Monsieur Hamelle, to whose civilities that hospitable and gentlemanly Frenchman had recommended him, invited him to their houses, and introduced him to their friends, and it was among their domestics that the marvellous stories of Andrea began to take effect. The masters got hints from their servants, and when they

could induce the traveller to speak of those adventures in which he had been really engaged, which however was not often, for he was reserved and melancholy, they certainly tended to verify the fictions of Andrea.

Among other extraordinary things, of which Andrea gave at least twenty different versions, was an account of what his master had told him of being taken by the Algerines, and sold into slavery ; how one of the Sultanas fell in love with him as he was digging in the menial condition of a gardener ; how they had escaped together, after lulling the eunuch of the Seraglio with opium, and stealing the golden keys from under his head, which golden keys they broke into pieces, and sold in bits from time to time for subsistence ; and how as they were crossing a terrible desert, a dreadful lion came upon them and devoured the beautiful Sultana, from the shock of whose deplorable death the traveller had never been able to recover. The story, it is true, was equally wild and ridiculous ; but there were so many little probable incidents, mixed up

with extravagance, that it was naturally enough by most people supposed to have some foundation in fact, although embellished by the well-known fanciful powers of Andrea—at least it was generally believed that the traveller had really been taken by the Algerines, and had met with some extraordinary adventures in Africa.

CHAPTER XXVIII.



There is no power in Venice,
Can alter a decree established.

SHAKSPEARE.

ONE evening as the traveller was walking on the Piazza St. Marco, with two Venetian gentlemen with whom he had become acquainted, as they happened to stop opposite the church to look at the celebrated horses of Lysippus, of which one of the Venetians was giving him some account, a person in the garb of a gentleman requested to speak with him. The Venetians turned suddenly away, alarmed at the circumstance, while he, only surprised and curious to know what the stranger had to say, followed him

into a little coffee-house near the palace. The moment that he entered, the door was shut, and two other officers immediately came to him and said he must submit to be blind-folded. He had heard enough of the police of Venice to know that resistance, in such circumstances, would be folly ;—he accordingly submitted. They then led him through the house, and embarked him in a gondola, which from the motion he felt, conveyed him quickly to a considerable distance from the spot where he was embarked. By the sound of the oars and the closeness of the air, he thought at one time they were passing under one of the bridges, but he soon discovered that the boat was in a vaulted gallery of great extent, in which he was landed on steps leading to a low door-way, where it was necessary for him to stoop so much on entering that he was in a manner obliged to creep.

He was then conducted along a narrow passage, and up a steep flight of steps, into a free space, which he at first thought was

the open air, but the echo that answered to the sound of their passing, convinced him it must either be a church or some other large empty building.

When they had seemingly traversed the resounding pavement of this edifice, they halted, and he could hear by what took place, that after three stamps of the foot, a heavy stone trap-door was raised. He was then ordered to descend, and he heard by their breathing that several other persons, besides his conductors, were near him. At the bottom of these steps he heard the dashing of water, and he was desired to step forward ; but instead of finding himself in a boat as he expected, he was suddenly inclosed alone in something that he at first, by the shutting of the door, supposed was a closet, but which by the motion, he soon found was rather of the nature of a chest, and that he was sunk in it under the water, and drawn beneath a wall to an open space on the other side, where the vehicle was again opened, and he found by the sound

of their voice that he was committed to the charge of other officers. These led him along a spacious gallery, as he conceived it must be from the sound, and then up a flight of stairs into a room, which from the smell of lamps he knew to be lighted, and where the bandage was unclosed from his eyes, and he saw that his conductors were masqued. In this room he was detained several hours.

It was a spacious chamber, into which several doors opened, but it had no windows, nor was it otherwise lighted than by a large antique lamp depending from the vaulted cieling. He was not, however, allowed to remain long here; for an officer, also in masque, soon came in and led him through one of the doors into a hall where the central tribunal of the police was then sitting.

In this gloomy apartment several officers in masque were standing—a rack was in the middle of the floor, with a trough under it, the sides of which seemed to have been

recently sprinkled with blood. At a table covered with black velvet, two secretaries in masque were sitting, and two large silver lamps, with massy inkstands of the same metal, stood before them. One of the secretaries had charge of an open volume, in which some record was already inscribed; the other seemed prepared to note down evidence on loose sheets of paper. Behind a grating, which extended along the whole length of the table, several persons were seated—these were the judges.

The traveller was rather amazed than under the influence of any apprehension by what had taken place, and when ordered to stand in a tribune opposite to the judges, he mounted with a firm step. Nothing was said to him; but the secretary, before whom the volume lay open, read aloud a minute and circumstantial account of all that he had done, and of every place where he had been from the time of his arrival in Venice. He was then asked if it contained any circumstance not true, but he at once acknow-

ledged it was astonishingly correct in every particular. One of the judges from behind the grating or lattice-work, enquired if he knew any person at that time in Venice, who might be actuated against him by malice; and he answered promptly, that he did not.

“Is there any person who may be so actuated?” said the same voice. The traveller for a moment hesitated, and then replied firmly, “I do think there is one in the world who may be my enemy. I know however but one.”

“Look behind you,” said the judge. He turned round, and from the place where he was standing, he saw in a large mirror the reflection of a gallery brilliantly illuminated, and three persons coming towards the mirror. “That man between these two officers in masque,” he exclaimed, with the accent of superstitious horror, “if I have an enemy in the world, is the man.” As he still looked, the position of the mirror was changed, and the scene disappeared.

He then turned towards the place where the judges sat concealed. They were consulting together, and he thought that he recognised in one of them the voice of a gentleman whom he had met in company. He heard, however, the words slavery, Africa, and fetters, distinctly pronounced in their conference, and his blood ran cold with apprehension. The same person who had hitherto addressed him, ordered one of the officers in attendance to examine his legs and wrists ; this was done in silence, and the officer briefly reported that they certainly bore the marks of having worn irons.

“ There is nothing to impute against him,” said the voice from behind the lattice. “ Let him be conducted to the house whence he was brought ; and stranger,” added the judge, addressing him—“ respect the justice of Venice ; the crime of which you were accused, is now ascertained to have been a malicious invention—the criminal will be dealt with as his malice deserves,

and the insulted dignity of the state requires; he would have made this sublime tribunal subservient to his own vindictive wickedness, and for that he will be punished. But stranger, beware—what you have seen here must not be told within the dominions of the republic, and you have learnt enough to convince you that it cannot be mentioned in Venice, without being known to this tribunal.”

The traveller shuddered as he descended from the tribune, and returned to the anti-chamber, where his eyes were again covered with a handkerchief. He breathed as if he was under the influence of the night-mare—the moisture of his throat and mouth was dried, and a parchedness more horrible than the thirst of a fever, almost denied him the faculty of articulation.—The masques, as before, conducted him along in silence, but not by the same way. He passed through no water—he was embarked in no gondola, but in the course of a few minutes he found himself in the

coffee-house where he was first blind-folded, and the same officer who had called him aside from his friends, having removed the bandage from his eyes, wished him good night.

CHAPTER XXIX.



The pittering grasshopper and humming bee,
Yea, the hoarse note of the dull cawing rook,
Will sometimes seem more sweetly musical
Than larks at morn, or nightingales at eve.
Such is the power of circumstance.

THE FATAL DISCOVERY.

THE circumstances of the accusation left an indelible impression on the mind of our adventurer, and he quitted Venice next day. He cared not which way he went;—his only object was to escape from a city, where he was exposed to an invisible scrutiny, and subjected to an inquisition so tremendous in its operation. The obvious course that presented itself was to land on the terra firma, and to travel into some of

the other Italian states ; but he was so impressed with the terrors of the Venetian police, that his whole mind was occupied with the single idea of seeking safety and protection beyond the reach of the mysterious fangs of that appalling aristocracy. Accordingly he threw himself into the first vessel that he found on the eve of departure, and was disembarked in the course of the same day at a small town in the dominions of the House of Austria. It was but a village scattered along a pebbly beach, at the foot of a gently rising ground, and the reflection of the setting sun sparkling upon the single-paned windows of the cottages, might be compared to the glistening of the dew-drops in the bosoms of the primrose and the daisy. The inhabitants were holding a little festival in honour of their patron-saint, St. Peter Martyr, who has been immortalized by the pencil of Titian. They had adorned his image with garlands, and were entertaining him with their best musical efforts, which rivalled in harmony the hymns that extolled the idol Bell and the

Dragon, or the golden statue of himself which Nebuchadnezzar set up to be worshipped of old by the Babylonians.

Before the image of the saint, a table was covered with a handsome cloth, white as the driven snow; and, besides several glasses filled with flowers, it exhibited plates of chesnuts which had been blessed, and sundry sweet and curious cakes, that among other ingredients were also enriched with benedictions. These were for sale, and two priests, under whose superintendence the solemnity was got up, pocketed the money. But the simple fishermen and their children were pleased to purchase, and it will be a happy thing for the priesthood in general, if they have no greater offences to answer for, than the little pious frauds which lighten the leisure of labour, and promote innocent hilarity.

For some time prior to the festival, the lads of the village had mustered their savings for a display of fire-works in honour of the saint, such as some of them saw exhibited in the Italian towns; but all the

powder which they were able to purchase was only sufficient for a very twinkling exhibition, and three patteraroes, which they had bought to fire off on the occasion, were obliged to remain unloaded. This, to be sure, was a very mortifying circumstance, for they had boasted to their neighbours of the village of St. Stephano on the Hill, that they were to awaken all the echoes of the mountains by the noise of the magnificent cannon, which they had consecrated to the perpetual service of St. Peter Martyr. However, as sound was the main thing which they had promised, it seemed to matter very little by what cause it was produced; accordingly, immediately after the display of their fire-works, four of the stoutest young fishermen, while the smoke yet hovered on the spot, with equal skill and vigour, clapped thin planks of wood so cleverly together, that the noise was scarcely inferior to what might have been expected from the patteraroes, and as it pleased the populace quite as well, and occasioned much more merriment than could have been ex-

pected from their patteraroes, nothing in the whole entertainment to St. Peter Martyr went off with more eclat, and the inhabitants of St. Stephano on the Hill, to this day, debate among themselves as to the fact of the patteraroes having been fired on this memorable occasion, so much in precision and effect did the clapping of the boards equal the utmost faculty of the consecrated ordnance. The festivity was prolonged till several hours after dark, and at sun-set a number of paper lanterns were lighted up to glorify the saint.

The rude gaiety of this village festival, was to the heart of the traveller like a draught of clear, fresh, and cool water in a thirsty desert. It came, in contrast to the gaudy harlotry of Venetian dissipation, like green fields, and shady trees, and flowing streams, and singing birds, where ever and anon the cheerful voice of the cuckoo is heard, to the drudge of the populous city, in whose bosom the sordid pursuits of avarice have not entirely extinguished the glowing sense of beauty

which he brought with him from his rural home.

The whole business was conducted with so much simplicity, and was so productive of happiness, though but for an evening, that our hero was impressed with a high opinion of the benevolence of the two priests, who were the chief actors. At the close of the performance, he addressed himself to them to request that they would procure him accommodation for the night, and assist him in the morning to obtain the means of transporting himself to Trieste; and by their influence he was accommodated with board and lodging in the best house in the village.

CHAPTER XXX.



There's some that ken, and some that dinna ken,
The whumpled meaning of your unco tale.

RAMSAY.

GREAT store of good cheer had been provided for the festival, and every visitor to his supper table was made heartily welcome by the honest and hospitable fisherman. Among the other guests, there was an old man who, a short time before, had come to live the solitary life of a hermit among the cliffs of the adjacent mountains. He had the reputation of being simple and inoffensive. His appearance was singularly wild and fantastical. He seldom spoke, and what he did say was uncouth, strange, and mystical. He could not be described as a natural, but he

had often the silly look of one, and he sometimes sat with his eyes glaring on vacancy, as if he contemplated some high and wonderful thing, beyond the sphere of human vision. But, notwithstanding these streaks and glances of a harmless lunacy, he was shrewd and knavish, and even not without some pretensions to supernatural sagacity; for he aspired to the character of a seer, and on more than one occasion predicted shame and sorrow to the lightest hearted of the village maidens, when they derided his admonitory exhortations.

On entering the apartment where the traveller was seated, he was joyously welcomed on all hands by the title of St. Anthony, a nickname given to him by the villagers, on account of his superior sanctity, and the little abstinence which he could display when any thing in the shape of savoury fare was set before him. On taking his seat at the table, he began to help himself to the nicest things on the board, but, in stretching his arm across, happened to catch the eye of the stranger, and was

instantly fascinated. He looked at him with an intense earnestness that surprised the whole company, and attracted the traveller's attention towards him. At first he seemed desirous to avoid his notice, and at one time indicated an intention to get up and go away: but again he perused him with another searching look, and instead of the simplicity of countenance which he commonly wore, his physiognomy gradually became animated with a curious expression of anxiety and cunning.

But the traveller, who was unconscious of the character which he had previously borne, was only surprised at the impertinence with which he so inquisitively regarded him. Sometimes he thought that he recognized in him features which he had formerly known, but they were so enveloped in a shaggy beard, and uncombed, knotty, and frantic locks, that they baffled his efforts to recollect them distinctly.

It was evident, however, that the hermit perfectly knew the stranger, and that he was actuated towards him by a sentiment

of deference and respect. But, after some time, perceiving that the recognition was either not reciprocal, or that the traveller was averse to indicate that they had ever been acquainted before, he resumed his wonted air of mystical idiotcy, and began to tell the guests their fortunes.

In doing this, the traveller discovered that his voice was artificial, and that his oracular manner was dictated by dissimulation. It was plain that the fortunes he predicted were shrewd guesses, formed from some knowledge of the disposition and character of the parties, and he began to suspect that the whole of this part of his acting was a device to apprise himself of their former acquaintance. Nor was he mistaken, for, after having performed the Egyptian with terms abundantly hieroglyphical, as we may call them, on account of the curious combinations of tropes and metaphors of which they consisted, he came round to where our hero was sitting, and proposed to unclasp the volume of futurity to him also. "I would rather," replied

the traveller, "that you would tell me something that I already know, by which I may ascertain how far your prophecies deserve confidence."

"Impossible," said St. Anthony, "the spirit is an eye. It hath neither lid nor motion. It can only discern what is coming; the things gone by it cannot know, for it never turns round. Let me, however, look at your hand;" and the traveller, somewhat curiously affected by the mystical tone of the Seer, held out his right hand. "This hand is a witness," he resumed. "It bears strange testimony against fortune. It is traced with deaths that are not murders,—with sins that are not crimes—with tears that are not penitent, and yet here is penitence, and crimes, and murder. I see broken pillars, and fallen temples, and tombs, and a wounded man. There is a lady too—flitting from place to place, in dark sepulchral recesses, and a furious ruffian pursues her. Whence come these youths with arms and horses? The lady is mounted, and this hand guides the rein,

and she departs, and all beyond is to me darkness and futurity." The prophet paused, but the traveller had already discovered that he was Furbo, who, in this sketchy affectation of prediction, had reminded him of the transactions which took place in the catacombs of Selinus.

The traveller was not pleased to be reminded of an affair which he wished to be forgotten, and with an indignant look, snatched his hand from Furbo.

Brief as this scene was, it had the effect of marring the mirth of the villagers for some time, which the traveller regretted, and rising from his seat, walked into the open air. Furbo did not immediately follow; it was his interest to maintain the character he had assumed, and he still continued to tell the fortunes of the other guests: when, however, he had in this way sacrificed sufficiently to dissimulation, he also went out, and found the traveller walking among the crowd, opposite to the image of the saint, and took an opportunity of holding a short and undisguised conversa-

tion with him. He told him that he was, indeed, Furbo of the catacombs of Selinus—that, after leaving them, he had led a most exemplary life as a Monk at Santa Margaritta—that the perfidious Paolo, having been seized, in connection with other robbers, had, in the hope of obtaining some mitigation of his own punishment, informed against him, in consequence of which he had been obliged to fly from Sicily, and was shipwrecked on the coast of Dalmatia, where, after wandering about in disguise for some time, he had come to the present neighbourhood to wait some change of fortune; and he concluded by an offer of his services, with an assurance that he was become a new man, honest, pious, and every thing that was good and desirable in a servant.

But the traveller shrunk from him as a living witness of his degradation, and lamented his own return to Europe, where he seemed liable alike, in the most extraordinary and remote situations, to be reminded of circumstances that he could not recollect

without shuddering and alarm. Having so long abstained from his former profligate courses, and received some tincture of religious sentiment, with a more lively sense of moral beauty and the delicacy of the ties of domestic affection than he had before possessed, it was natural that he should be averse to renew recollections that could only be recalled with pain and mortification. But why should he have felt alarm? He was in the possession of affluence. He was charged with no crime: but thereby hangs a tale, and we hasten to the disclosure.

CHAPTER XXXI.



—————That house was his.

The portal gates have fallen from their hinges,
The windows are unsashed, the roof lacks leading,
And docks and nettles in the court grow rank :
All witness to the noble master's absence.

THE MISANTHROPE.

OUR traveller, to avoid the importunities of Furbo, had ordered the horses which his host, the fisherman, hired for him from St. Stephano on the Hill, to be at the door an hour before the dawn; and he was far on the road to Trieste, when that worthy personage came again to offer his services. From Trieste he passed through the Tyrol to Vienna; but it is unnecessary that we should describe his desultory journies. Like other travellers, he inspected what-

ever was deemed curious or interesting : his wealth secured him access to all varieties of company, for his different letters of credit, exchanged from place to place, were such that the bankers deemed it their duty to show him more than their wonted courtesy.

In this desultory way of life, without forming any friendships, sedate, pensive, and reserved, he spent several years ; during which, he visited all the different capitals of Europe, except London and Paris.

The last city in which he resided was Madrid, where he remained a considerable time, but growing tired of it likewise, and experiencing the truth of a remark of Doctor Rubardo, “ That happiness when it is not naturally in the bosom, is as likely to be found among the mountains of Armenia, as in the finest towns of Christendom, he resolved to return to Asia Minor, and to take up his abode, as he promised, at Abel-jazeer. For this purpose he embarked at Carthagena, in a vessel bound for Constantinople, but soon after putting to sea, she was constrained by stress of weather and

damage, to make for Messina, where it was found necessary to unload her.

It happened on the day he landed, in passing along the streets, that the Cicerone whom he had hired to show him the town, pointed out to his attention a magnificent mansion which bore the marks of neglect and decay. "The owner," said the guide, "is the Count Corneli, who has not been heard of for many years, although his agent finds that he regularly draws for his income. It is not known where he is; sometimes the bills come from the east, sometimes from the west, from almost every country in the world, but no one has seen or heard of the Count. He is as mysterious as a spirit. When a child, he was sent to Naples, where he grew up, and afterwards went to Palermo: there he married, and his lady proving false, he went abroad, and has ever since been unknown to his family. He has a son, a fine youth of the name of Ferdinando, who formerly lived with his uncle, the Baron Alcamo, but he has just been sent to the university of Catania, to com-

plete his education. All Messina wonders what has become of the Count, and why he neglects his son, and this magnificent palace of his ancestors, the richest and noblest in Messina."

This intelligence produced a deep impression on the mind of the traveller, and he instituted a number of particular enquiries respecting the family of Corneli. He ascertained that none of his relations in Messina had any recollection of his person; that his lady had taken the veil in the convent of the Cistercian nuns at Sciacca, of which her aunt was the Abbess; and that, in a word, he was only an object of interest to those who thought it singular that a nobleman, in the possession of great affluence, should be so incurious respecting things in which, it might be supposed, he would have taken the strongest interest.

About a week after this incident, the agent of Corneli received a letter from Madrid, at the date of which, by bills drawn before and after, he understood the Count was residing in that metropolis, and by this

letter he was informed of his intention to return to Messina. Instructions were given to prepare the family mansion for his reception and to engage servants; and, at the same time the agent was requested to notify to some of the Count's relations his intended return, and the names of these relations were particularly mentioned. At the same time, and of the same date, the Baron Alcamo also received a letter from the Count, in which he was particularly thanked for the care and attention he had bestowed in the education of Ferdinando; and at the conclusion of this letter, the Count requested that he might be mentioned in the kindest manner to the Baroness, nor was Francisco and his sister Adeline forgotten.

The philosophical Baron was delighted at the news of the Count's return, and still more with the handsome letter which he had received; but he could not account in any satisfactory manner to himself, how the Count should have requested to be

remembered to the Baroness, and far less how he came to think of mentioning his nephew and niece; but upon consulting and conferring with his lady on the subject, she recollected that the Neapolitan Ambassador at the Court of Spain was married to a relation of her own, and had no doubt that his lady had informed the Count of all about them; for she presumed they were acquainted, as she was, in occasional correspondence with her through the medium of Adelina, Francisco's sister, not being herself, like the Sicilian ladies in general, at all mistress of her pen. Indeed the Baroness, according to her own account, had never met with a pen, since she left the convent where she was educated, that could write, far less spell—although it was very well known to the whole convent that she was naturally a very clever writer, and a most excellent speller. This, however, was not a misfortune peculiar to the Baroness Alcamo, for in the elderly circle of our own female

acquaintance, we have heard of similar melancholy frustrations of their accomplishments, and on more than one occasion, have mingled our sympathies, both with dowagers and tabbies, on the fluctuating nature of all living languages, and especially of the English, which since the appearance of **Doctor Johnson's Dictionary**, has undergone such a change, that the wise and sage generation that was educated before his time, really do not know how to put pen to paper, so as to satisfy the particularities of the present fastidious age of criticism.

However this may be, it was obvious from these letters that the Count might be soon expected; and the agent, with that assiduity which so well became his office, got the mansion prepared and servants hired without delay; nor did the Baron labour less earnestly in his vocation. He announced to all the learned of the town—the lawyers and physicians, who for lack of business had time to cultivate their un-

derstandings; and to the apothecaries, who in consequence of their mistakes in preparing prescriptions, had gained time to make chemical experiments, that his far-travelled friend, the Count Corneli, was expected home, and it would be exceedingly desirable that on his arrival he should be impressed with a favourable opinion of the improved intelligence of his native town.

In the meantime our traveller had made an excursion across the Straights to Reggio, a city of Calabria, where he resided some time, and when he left it to return to Messina, Count Corneli, on the same day, arrived alone at the portal of his ancestral mansion.

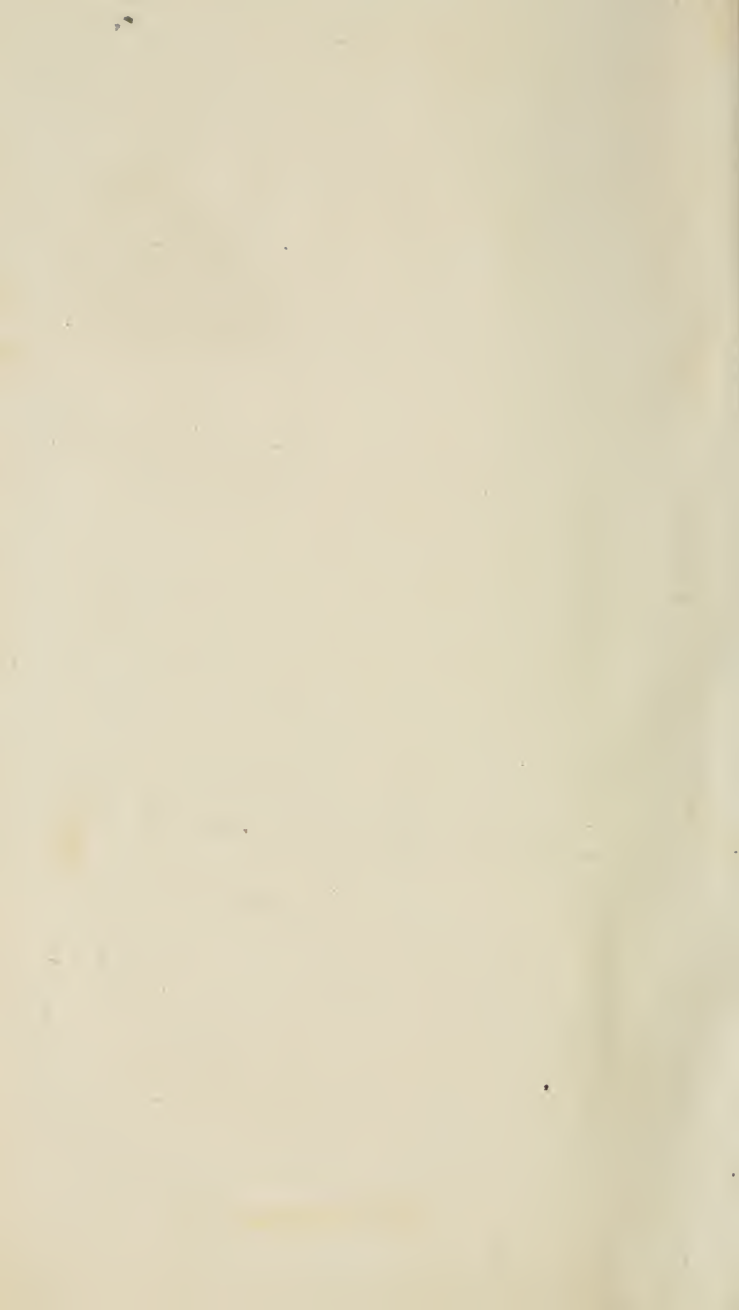
It was thought singular by the domestics that he should have come without any attendants, but he gave no explanation of this circumstance. They also wondered how he should have recollected the house, as it was known among them that he had not been in Messina since he

was a child. These things begat a curious opinion of him, which his reserved and mysterious manners, as he became better known to them, tended to strengthen.

Having now given some account of the history of Count Corneli, previous to the earthquake, it becomes our duty to resume the narrative of the transactions subsequent to that calamitous event.

END OF VOL. II.









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